

FREE

# Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk June 18, 2017

Mid edition No 769

## ELECTION

### How Labour took city in style

Incredible tale of toppling 100 years of Tory dominance

## JUSTICE

### Secure centre in fresh controversy

Blow to facility despite government taking control

## DEATH

### Royals lead tributes to Countess

Survivor of IRA bomb attack passes away at 93

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# Kent on Sunday

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## We are so often blind to the problems before us

It can be easy to assume that here in Kent we can observe the tragedy which occurred in Kensington this week with some detachment, safe in the knowledge that it couldn't happen here.

Indeed it is little wonder so many observers commented on how could this sort of event ever possibly be allowed to happen in the modern day? We consider ourselves so sophisticated and safety conscious that sometimes we don't see the peril which is staring us in the face.

Too often we take a 'well it's not happened yet' approach and hope as a consequence it never will.

But if that tower block ablaze was in a developing country, we would simply tut and consider ourselves above that sort of event. And certainly not something that could happen in the plush part of our capital.

I remember sitting and watching ferries leave Folkestone many, many years ago and often



Editor **Chris Britcher**

thinking it was strange they should leave with their bow doors still open - only closing them as they headed away from the harbour arm. My youthful assumption was simply 'well that's what they did'. By the time of the 1987 Zeebrugge ferry disaster - and the probe into what happened revealed that was a contributory factor - the talk then was of 'how could we ever do something so potentially risky?'. It happens every day. We just don't see it, it seems, until something awful occurs.

Quite how there were not more issues like Hillsborough when you think back to life on the football terraces is a mystery too.

A life without risk is not possible. A life where ensuring doors are shut, people are not crushed or fire cannot spread in a block of flats ought to be.

We assume a level of competency. When, of course, those in charge must demand it.

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## Contents

### News

#### 05 Countess dies at 93

Prince Charles leads the tributes

#### 07 Night flights at Manston?

Town's anxiety as its not ruled out

#### 08 Cops probe MP abuse

Claims racial abuse was hurled at him

#### 09 K&C changes admissions

Some cases will be turned away from under-fire hospital

#### 11 Detention centre attack

Fresh blows to unit taken over by MoJ

#### 12 KCC shines on services

Childrens' services performing well

#### 14 How Labour won the city

Examination of Tory loss in Canterbury

#### 19 Dreamland show proves a big hit

Despite fears of traffic chaos, last weekend's show was a success



PAGE 27 »



PAGE 08 »



PAGE 05 »



PAGE 14 »



PAGE 24 »



PAGE 11 »



PAGE 37 »

#### 24 Going back to classroom

Why more and more are back in education

#### 27 Wonder of board games

V&A bring exhibition to the county town

### Leisure

#### 28 Festival 2017 guide

Get out and about with fun for the family

### Plus

Letters .....Page 48

Images of Kent ..... Page 49

Sport ..... Page 56

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## Prince's sorrow as much loved countess dies at 93

By Laura Elston

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THE Prince of Wales has paid tribute to his "very special god-mother" Countess Mountbatten of Burma, who died at her home in Kent this week at the age of 93.

Charles said the countess played an "extremely important" part in his life and he would "miss her presence most dreadfully".

Born Patricia Mountbatten, the countess was the Duke of Edinburgh's first cousin and was the daughter of Charles's beloved great-uncle Earl Mountbatten.

She died peacefully at her home in Mersham, near Ashford, on Tuesday, surrounded by her children.

The Queen and other members of the royals made frequent, unpublished visits to her home.

The Prince said in a statement: "I was deeply saddened to learn of the death of my very special godmother, Lady Mountbatten, whom I have known and loved ever since I can first remember.

"She played an extremely important part in my life and I shall miss her presence most dreadfully."



**TRIBUTE:** Countess Mountbatten passed away at her home in Mersham on Tuesday

A Buckingham Palace spokeswoman said: "The Queen and the Duke are aware and have privately passed on their condolences."

The countess's father Lord Mountbatten, her 14-year-old son Nicholas Knatchbull and her mother-in-law the Dowager Lady Brabourne were all murdered by the IRA in 1979 when their boat was blown up off the coast of Sligo.

The countess, then known as Lady Brabourne, suffered serious

injuries, but survived the blast, as did her husband Lord Brabourne and Nicholas's twin brother Timothy. A local boat boy, Paul Maxwell, 15, also died.

A statement issued on behalf of the Knatchbull and Mountbatten families said: "It is with great sadness that we announce the death of the Countess Mountbatten of Burma.

"Her husband, the celebrated film producer Lord Brabourne, died

in 2005.

"The arrangements for a funeral in London followed by a burial service in Mersham will be announced in due course."

Her husband Lord Brabourne was the producer of films such as *A Passage To India* and *Death On The Nile*, and they had six surviving children. The then Princess Elizabeth, her third cousin, was one of her bridesmaids at her wedding in 1946.

## Hero PC killed during Westminster terror bid receives bravery award

FORMER Bromley PC Keith Palmer, who died in the Westminster terror attack, has been awarded a posthumous George Medal for bravery in the Queen's civilian gallantry list.

The list, published on Friday, commends the officer's heroic actions in protecting members of the public and parliament from an armed terrorist in March.

He died after being stabbed by Khalid Masood, who was born in Dartford and grew up in Tunbridge Wells. Masood had just moments earlier driven into crowds walking along Westminster Bridge.

PC Palmer was 48-years-old and married with a five-year-old daughter.

Metropolitan Police commissioner Cressida Dick, said: "Keith acted that day with no thought for his own safety, intent simply on doing his job and protecting members of the public and parliament. He paid the ultimate price for his selfless actions. We continue to grieve the loss of a

much-loved and respected colleague and friend while supporting his family through this truly difficult time.

"I know that I speak on behalf of all of my officers and staff when I say how immensely proud we all are that PC Palmer is to receive posthumously the George Medal for bravery.

"It is an honour that could not be more deserved and I know it will mean a great deal to all those who knew and loved him."

PC Palmer served in Bromley between 2002 and 2009 and had served on the parliamentary and diplomatic protection group since April 2016.

The gallantry list citation adds: "PC Palmer's bravery and professionalism unquestionably saved lives. PC Palmer did his duty.

"He stood his ground and placed himself between parliament and a terrorist determined to harm those within. In doing so he made the ultimate sacrifice."

## Force branded 'inadequate' following damning report

FAILURE to report thousands of offences has seen Kent Police branded "inadequate" in a damning report.

The document, published this week by HMIC Criminal Justice Inspectorates, states that based on findings of its examination of crime reports from June 1, and November 30, "more work needs to be done".

The force's chief constable Alan

Pughley said: "The report makes for disappointing reading, however we accept its findings and have responded quickly to them to make the changes we need to improve the accuracy of our crime recording.

"All of those crimes that were not recorded have been thoroughly reviewed and safeguarding has been put in place."

## Phew, what a scorcher! Get set for weekend of sunshine

TEMPERATURES are set to rocket this weekend as the county continues to bathe in hot weather.

Forecasters say it could reach as high as 30-degrees C on Sunday and that the good weather is set to continue into the early part of next week.

A spokesman for the Met Office said: "The fine and settled conditions will persist during

Sunday and Monday with plenty of sunshine.

"Temperatures will continue to increase and it will become hot.

"It will remain very warm and muggy overnight. However, it is likely to become cooler on 'Tuesday'."

The cooler temperatures are likely to be joined by more overcast, cloudy conditions.





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## Warning lives at risk after rise in ambulance raids

COLD hearted crooks are targeting ambulances and ambulance stations in a string of raids which are putting "lives at risk", according to health chiefs.

The South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SECAmb) says attacks have been made on emergency vehicles in Herne Bay, Sheppey, where vital equipment, including a defibrillator was

stolen.

It follows raids on ambulance stations in Ashford and Thanet in recent weeks.

SECAmb's Chris Stamp said: "Those responsible need to know the seriousness of their actions which undoubtedly have put lives at risk."

It is appealing for help in finding those responsible.



**ICONIC:** Banksy's EU commentary

## MP launches bid to keep Banksy work

A CAMPAIGN to protect a piece by coveted street artist Banksy, which appeared in Dover last month, has been launched by the port town's MP.

Charlie Elphicke wants to drum up support to keep the "iconic artwork", which depicts a workman on a ladder chipping away at one of the 12 stars on the European Union flag, in Dover.

It is currently located on the side of the former Castle Amusements building, which is set to be demolished, and property owners the Godden family, which also owned the building upon which he daubed his previous Kent work - Art Buff in Folkestone - said the piece is likely to be removed and sold, and that they were looking at options with a London art gallery.

It comes after Dover District Council chiefs met this week to discuss the future of the piece, having been urged by a scrutiny committee to explore available options to protect it "as a matter of urgency".

Whilst noting that it was a matter for the land owner, the cabinet said it would welcome keeping the mural in Dover, although not necessarily on the same site, as long as it did not impede the town centre, Bench Street, Western Docks master plan development.

Some collectors say it is too big to sell.

## Work on controversial garden town plans could start in just three years

By Tom Pyman

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WORK on a controversial garden town designed to deliver up to 12,000 homes in east Kent could begin as early as 2020, bosses claim.

The government gave the proposed development in Otterpool Park, near Folkestone, the green light last November despite strong opposition from local campaigners.

A series of protest marches and other demonstration events have taken place over concerns it would destroy the Shepway countryside, though chiefs behind the project have attempted to allay fears by insisting "it won't be swathes of concrete".

This week, fresh details of the plans were announced as drop-in consultation events took place across the district.

Key features proposed for the garden town include a high street, where there would be shops and amenities as well as homes, while



**PLANS:** Otterpool garden town

green space could be utilised for allotments, food growing areas and sports pitches.

Currently, two secondary schools and seven primary schools are proposed, while there is a heavy emphasis

on business, with large investment in broadband infrastructure proposed, as well as an innovation fund to encourage companies to relocate to the area.

Furthermore, conversations are ongoing with Network Rail about upgrading the nearest train station, Westenhanger, as well attempts to extend the high speed line from central London - a proposal backed by Kent County Council.

Health care is also at the top of the agenda for project managers, with the aim of introducing a GP practice, primary and secondary care and social care services.

In an "ambitious" timeline, the next six months will be spent responding to issues and suggestions while continuing to develop plans, before preparing and submitting a formal planning application to the local authority in the spring next year, following a consultation.

By late 2019, chiefs expect an initial decision in principle by Shepway District Council, which would then mean work could begin in 2020.

## Parties unite to urge PM for voting change

CANDIDATES from across five parties in Kent have joined forces to send a letter to Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn calling for urgent changes to the electoral system.

In the pledge from some 27 candidates who stood across the county in this month's general election, including those from the Green Party, Labour, Liberal Democrats, Ukip and Christian Peoples Alliance, the argument is made that of the 1.3 million voters in Kent, only 500,000 voted for an MP who now represents them - leaving some 800,000 without an MP who represents their views.

The Green's Stuart Jeffery, who organised the letter said: "We urgently need to reform our electoral system, the current one may have worked in Victorian times but life has moved on and most first world countries have moved with it."

"The current system means that number of votes that each party needs to gain a seat is completely disproportional."

## Bank puts £200m for SMEs up for grabs

SMALL firms in Kent are set to benefit from a £200m lending fund launched by a bank on Friday.

The cash from HSBC is part of a wider £10bn fund for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across the UK, as part of a broader commitment to helping British businesses realise their ambitions for growth.

A major focus of this year's fund is to encourage small businesses to feel confident about exploring opportunities for export.

Brian Weare, HSBC's regional director for the south east region, said: "This fund is all about helping those businesses make investments that will enable them to achieve their goals while stimulating our local economy and creating jobs. We have so many ambitious businesses in our region who are keen to grow locally, nationally and internationally."

Amanda Murphy, head of commercial banking at HSBC UK, added: "SMEs are the lifeblood of the UK economy, and for many there is an opportunity and appetite to grow their business through exporting."

## Ecologist set to take to Glastonbury stage

AN ecologist from the University of Kent is heading to Glastonbury next week, where she will be hosting the Sex & Bugs & Rock 'n Roll roadshow.

Joined by a supergroup of researchers at the five-day festival, Dr Zoe Davies from the university's school of anthropology and conservation aims to take scientific and environmental matters to the general public at popular summer time events.

Championed by the British Ecological Society (BES), this year's event focuses on the Hidden Wonders of Woodlands.

Dr Davies will be leading a project within the event to 'create your ideal woodland' that will also be used to produce a survey on the perception of woodlands, supported by the Durrell Institute for Conservation and Ecology (DICE) at the university.

There will also be the opportunity to learn about the types of bacteria often found living on festival kit, including tents.

Sex & Bugs & Rock 'n Roll will be in the Green Futures Field at Glastonbury from June 21-25.



# Ramsgate anger at Manston 'night flight' freight proposals

By Tom Pyman

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BOSSES at one of the major parties working to re-open Manston airport admit controversial night flights may be "unavoidable" amid fears their plans will "devastate" nearby towns.

A statement by The Ramsgate Society outlined objections to RiverOak Strategic Partners' (RSP) proposals, which have this week been put out to public consultation, as it works to obtain a compulsory purchase order for the site, owned by bosses behind the Stone Hill Park project, through a development consent order (DCO).

The company last month published a report pledging some 30,000 jobs over the next two decades, though the site owners said figures in the document "exposed" RSP claims the plans would not require night flights.

Stone Hill Park aims to deliver 2,500 homes and leisure facilities and has frequently dismissed the possibility of Manston returning to aviation-only use.

A spokesperson for The Ramsgate Society said: "The UK's only successful cargo-focused airport, East Midlands, has more than half of its cargo flights come in at night – in other words, between 11pm and 7am.

"That is the nature of the air cargo mar-



**UNCERTAIN:** Will Manston Airport ever re-open again?

ket. To persuade cargo airlines to move to Manston, RSP will have to offer night flights. Whatever your views are about the current owner's plans for a mixed use redevelopment of the site, RSP's plan has to be resisted.

"It will devastate the town we cherish and which the society, the town council and others are all seeking to regenerate and conserve its rich heritage."

In response, RSP director George Yerrall said: "From an operational point of view, RiverOak considers night flights to be unde-

sirable. Consequently, RiverOak will seek to minimise night flights and incentivise airlines to fly during the day by levying additional charges and requirements on any night movements. However, we recognise that night flights might be unavoidable in certain operating circumstances.

"Therefore, whilst our proposals work on the basis that air freight operations would be predominantly during the daytime, we are assessing the possible impact of a small number of night flights."

## Blood scandal protest heads to Whitehall

VICTIMS from the county of the blood contamination scandal will gather in London on Wednesday to once again protest over the government's handling of their plight.

Among those gathering in Whitehall will be Steve Dymond, 61, from Broadstairs, who contracted hepatitis C. They will protest outside the Department of Health before a petition is handed in at Number 10.

## Chatham work gets under way this week

IMPROVEMENT works begin in Chatham town centre on Monday, as £4 million of government funding is used to help regenerate the area.

Known as the Chatham Placemaking project the work is expected to be finally completed in 2018.

It includes making it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to get from the train station to the town centre.

## Star joins Animal Aid

VEGAN comedian Sara Pascoe has become a patron of Tonbridge-based animal rights organisation Animal Aid.

The star of the likes of The Thick of It, QI and Mock the Week, joins the likes of Pretenders' singer Chrissie Hynde actress Carol Royale and activist Peter Tatchell in supporting the organisation.

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# Probe of 'racial abuse' to MP as he secured another term

POLICE are investigating claims Rehman Chishti was racially abused as he was re-elected MP for Gillingham and Rainham.

Heckles could be heard as the Conservative took to the stage for his acceptance speech in the early hours of last Friday morning, and it is alleged he was verbally abused by someone at the count.

The MP secured 27,091 votes - almost 10,000 more than his closest rival, Labour's Andy Stamp - in last week's general election, to retain the seat he has held since 2010.

A police spokesperson said: "Kent Police is investigating a report of a racially aggravated public order offence at around 4.15am on Friday June 9 at the Medway Park Leisure Centre in Mill Road, Gillingham.



"Nobody has been arrested at this stage and enquiries are on-going."

Mr Chishti, who took to the stage to take a swipe at his political opponents in the Labour Party - a

party he once belonged to and campaigned for prior to leaping over the political divide to join the Tories - in which he said the party "do not believe in democratic process".

# Garden city hits back at £33 high-speed rail fares

BOSSES behind the Ebbsfleet Garden City project are calling for "fare penalties" for those travelling on high speed trains between the development and London to be scrapped, as part of its response to consultations on the future of Kent rail services.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation has told the Department for Transport - which is consulting on rail services in the county ahead of a new franchise to run services coming into effect in December 2018 - that fares of £33 for a peak time return ticket to the capital from the garden city are too high.

Chiefs say this translates to an annual season ticket cost of £4,508 - comparable to the cost of travel from a location such as Maidstone, which is 20 miles

beyond Ebbsfleet.

EDC says it recognises the premium ticket price secures a journey into the capital of just 17 minutes, but claim once the cost of a basic annual season ticket passes the £5,000 mark, it could be a deterrent to many commuters on mid-level salaries to be able justify using the high speed service.

As part of its submissions, the EDC is calling for clear plans for increased passenger demand from the local international station to the capital, as the development at the garden city - where 15,000 homes are set to be built by 2031.

Chiefs point out the garden city has already seen more than 600 starts of new homes in the last year alone and forecasts for 5,100 new homes by 2020/21.

## Smash kills motorcyclist

POLICE have confirmed a motorcyclist was killed in a smash with a van on the M2 on Friday morning.

The crash occurred on the coastbound carriageway of the motorway between junction 6 for Faversham and junction 7 for the Thanet Way at around 8.30am.

## Kittens found dumped

TWO kittens found dumped in a sodden box in Medway are recovering in RSPCA care.

The black and white kittens, named Flora and Kiara, both just six weeks old, were found in a wet cardboard box near to the border of Gillingham and Chatham on Tuesday, June 6.

## Bank robbery charge

WHITSTABLE man Danny Powell has been arrested and charged with committing a bank robbery in the seaside town.

Officers were called at 10.20am on March 25 to a report that cash had been stolen from a premises in the High Street after a staff had been presented with a threatening note.

## Pensioner mowed down

POLICE in Faversham have launched an appeal for witnesses after a pensioner suffered serious injuries after being hit by car.

Officers were called to a report that a silver Skoda Yeti and a pedestrian had collided in North Lane at 9.21am on Tuesday.

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# Urgent cases block at K&C

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

**H**UNDREDS of patients who would normally be taken to Kent & Canterbury Hospital's urgent care centre by ambulance will instead be taken to emergency departments at other sites from Monday.

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust controversially announced earlier this year it was set to make a number of cuts to services at the city hospital, and expects approximately 35 people who normally attend by ambulance will be diverted to the William Harvey in Ashford and the QEOM in Margate.

Bosses stress these are only temporary changes and will not affect surgical services, chemotherapy services, renal, vascular and urology services, as well as all outpatient clinics at the Kent & Canterbury.

The urgent care centre itself will also still be open to treat walk-in patients with minor injuries and illnesses, including sprains and strains, broken bones, wounds, wound infections, minor burns and scalds, minor head injuries, insect and animal bites, minor eye injuries and minor injuries to the back, shoulder and chest.

As the crisis grows, campaigners at



**HOSPITAL:** But campaigners hope pressure of new Labour MP in city could make a difference

the Concern for Health in East Kent (Chek) group were due to hold a public meeting at the Canterbury Academy on Friday evening off the back of a protest march in the city centre earlier this month.

A similar meeting was planned for earlier in the year but was scrapped due to purdah rules ahead of last week's general election.

Trust chief executive Matthew Kershaw, medical director Paul Stevens, chair of the local clinical commissioning group, Simon Dunn, returning Conservative MP for Faversham and Mid Kent, Helen Whately, and newly-elected Labour MP for Canterbury, Rosie Duffield are set to attend.

Chek chair Ken Rogers said: "I have spoken to Rosie Duffield and believe

that her feelings on what is happening in east Kent, especially at the K&C, is very much aligned with ours.

"Hopefully with this new changing political landscape we will see the end of the enormous amount of money being wasted on the sustainability and transformation plans, and that waste ploughed back into patient care."

## Air HQ leaps latest hurdle

PLANS to move Kent air ambulance's operational base from Marden to land at Rochester Airport have moved a step closer after an application was rubber-stamped by councillors this week.

Medway planning chiefs resolved to approve the proposal on Tuesday night, and will now write to the secretary of state asking for him to call the application in.

The charity's plan would mean relocating some 30 staff to a new office block on the site which would accommodate 14 additional staff members plus six visiting pilots and crew.

## Radar tower's £1m upgrade

WORK has begun on the construction of a new radar tower in Northfleet to oversee safe navigation on the River Thames.

The Gravesend-based Port of London Authority (PLA) - responsible for safety and promoting use of the river - is investing £1m in replacing the existing radar, located on Tarmac's riverside office building, with a new 50-metre tall tower that will house the latest, energy efficient system.

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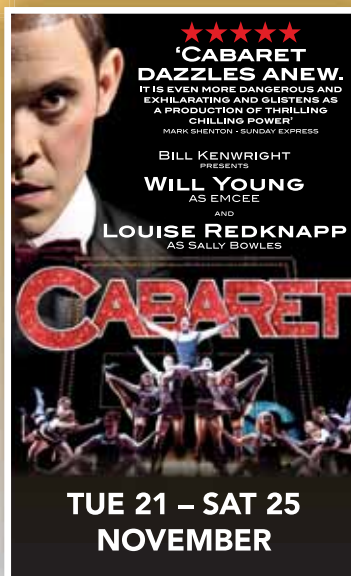
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# Young offenders' centre faces yet more criticism after latest report

Taken over by the Ministry of Justice last year following a damning TV documentary, the Medway Secure Training Centre has now been exposed as allowing inmates to watch sexually-explicit content

By Tom Pugh

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

YOUNG inmates have been able to watch sexually-explicit content on television at a scandal-hit Kent youth jail judged 'inadequate' by Ofsted following its latest inspection.

Managers at Medway Secure Training Centre (STC) in Rochester have taken steps to avoid a repeat of the explicit viewing but they are not yet in place, inspectors said.

The disclosure emerged in a damning Ofsted report which rated the safety of young people, effectiveness of leaders and managers and the promoting of positive behaviour at the STC as inadequate.

The centre, which houses up to 76 male and female inmates aged 12 to 18, was the subject of an undercover BBC Panorama programme last year showing alleged abuse and mistreatment of youngsters.

Kent Police has charged a number of staff employed at the time.

The government announced in the wake of the broadcast that it would take over management of the former G4S-run facility through the National Offender Management Service (NOMS).

NOMS took over on July 1 last year and Ofsted inspected from March 6 to 10 this year.

In its report, published on Tuesday, Ofsted reported "steady progress" in some areas since the last inspection, but overall the STC was inadequate.

It emerged in the report staff employment history and past performance information for those previously employed by G4S were not available to the current governor.

"This means that staff who may have experienced disciplinary or capability measures no longer have this information on their employment records," the report said. "This is a serious shortfall."

CCTV coverage was still lacking in areas where young inmates have consistently reported feeling unsafe, including on stairwells and the education block, the report said.

Body-worn cameras now issued to all frontline staff were not always switched on when they should be and footage was not always reviewed, inspectors found.

In 15 incidents reviewed by inspectors from documents, CCTV and body-worn camera footage, force was found to be have been used appropriately to prevent injury in most cases.

Oversight of incidents of violence was deemed poor, with no accurate records made, inspectors added.

Criticism was also levelled at incomplete bullying logs designed to tackle the problem. Some had insufficient or no detail about why they were opened in the first place, or failed to



**CRITICISM:** Continued failings at the Medway Secure Training Centre has prompted another damaging inspection report

detail the outcomes.

Inspectors said an expansion of the centre's safeguarding team was positive but added the senior lead person has no previous experience or qualifications in safeguarding children.

Restraint handling plans, designed to inform staff of young inmates with medical conditions, were "well-intentioned" but the approach made it difficult for staff to remember those who might be affected by restraint holds.

"A number of staff working with the young people are unaware of the contents of these plans and the implications for practice," the report said.

Positive aspects highlighted included improvements in consultation with young inmates and in the complaints arrangements, although some weaknesses were also found.

Inspectors said the centre was led by a suitably-experienced governor - the second since NOMS took over. But the report said there were a number of problems holding back swift progress

at the STC.

It said: "The confusion and weak understanding of responsibilities, coupled with a poorly-trained and largely unqualified workforce, including at managerial grades, is hampering the governor's ability to make swifter progress at the centre."

"The senior management team members are unsure of their responsibilities and accountabilities, as previous job titles, expectations of roles and suites of paperwork were taken away by the previous provider, G4S."

"At the time of the inspection, there had only been partial introduction and implementation of NOMS arrangements of staff. The shortage of historical material impacts on the management of staff."

It added: "Staff and managers are not clear enough about what they should do, what they should record, where it should be recorded and why."

Deborah Coles, director of the charity Inquest, said: "This report exposes

the failure of government to act on previous concerns about child protection, safeguarding and dangerous restraint."

"STCs are a flawed model incapable of reform and need closing down. We need to reinvest in child-focused therapeutic local authority children's homes."

"It is a shocking indictment of our justice system that it is deemed acceptable to subject children to such ill treatment and failings in care."

Government officials said young inmates watching sexual content on TVs in the facility was "completely unacceptable", and immediate action was taken to modify TV sets to prevent it happening again.

A Ministry of Justice spokesman said: "The safety and welfare of young people in our custody is our absolute priority."

"We are pleased that this report found Medway has made steady progress in a number of areas since

the last inspection, but we are clear that there is still a lot of work to do.

"That is why we are implementing a comprehensive plan which includes the appointment of new specialist, highly-trained staff and improved support for vulnerable children."

"We will continue to work hard to drive improvements and have put in place a new leadership team to help make this happen as quickly as possible, to ensure we are delivering the best support to those in our care."

Meanwhile, G4S said it was "mystified" by claims in the report that employee records might not be available as a "detailed handover" took place a year ago to the satisfaction of the Ministry of Justice and the new operating team.

A G4S spokesman said: "We cannot comment on what may have happened since the transfer in July last year and neither are we aware of any subsequent requests for employee information."



**SUCCESS:** Kent has ensured safety for 1,500 asylum-seeker children while ensuring a high standard of care for the county's most vulnerable children too, according to government inspectors

# From 'dark days' into the light

Despite enormous pressure from asylum-seeking children and London boroughs, **Tom Pyman** finds out how County Hall has secured a 'good' rating from Ofsted for its vital children's services team

**'G**OOD' services are being offered to children and families in Kent despite a whirlwind period for the county council which saw it become responsible for hundreds of unaccompanied young asylum seekers.

Ofsted this week published a positive report into KCC's children's services after 12 inspectors spent more than three weeks visiting centres and meeting staff, parents and children across the county in March.

In 2015, huge numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children arrived in Kent through Eurotunnel and the Port of Dover during the migrant crisis from the camp known as the 'Jungle' in the French port town of Calais.

Under the Children Act 1989, it is KCC's legal responsibility to care for under-18s who arrive in the county from abroad, and council chiefs have made no secret of the pressure that has been placed on its ability to provide accommodation and placements.

However, the Ofsted inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers found the local authority "tackled the increased demand on children's services effectively, along with the work it was already doing".

The report added that senior managers responded swiftly to the changing needs, and that political leaders were responsive to budget pressures, supporting increased financial investment, even when cash to support the council was not immediately made available by central government.

The 'good' rating represents a significant improvement for the council, whose services were deemed 'inadequate' in 2010 and then 'adequate' three years later.

Council leader Paul Carter said the 'inadequate' judgement was "one of the most depressing and dark days of my reign" and that the report "encapsulates the journey we have been on since".

He said: "It's been a long hard journey against the backdrop of having to support some 1,400 to 1,500 young asylum seekers which, if we had to cater for them alone, would make us one of the largest children's services departments in the country."

"On top of that we have to support our indigenous young people and keep them as safe as possible."

"Indeed, something that is much forgotten that does put pressure in less direct ways is supporting some 1,400 young people placed in care by other local authorities into the county of Kent."

A lot of those come from London boroughs who have struggled to cope with the number of vulnerable young people in their authorities and instead turn to the Home Counties, and more often than not, Kent especially, to help ease the pressure.

While those London councils are responsible for the financial cost of the accommodation - typically much cheaper in the counties compared to the capital - responsibility for schooling and medical coverage "falls squarely on the shoulders of Kent residents".

Bosses add that a lot of such young people also go missing, therefore adding to the strain already faced by Kent Police.

To help Kent as it was becoming overwhelmed with unaccompanied asylum seeking children, the government set up a national transfer scheme last year, where other local authorities across the country would come forward on a voluntary basis and offer to take children into their care.

It was the result of intense lobbying from both the county council itself and a number of Kent MPs, many of whom had raised the issue with ministers in the House of Commons.

Peter Oakford is KCC's deputy leader and cabinet member for strategic commissioning and public health, but

was in charge of children's services at the heart of the crisis.

He told KoS: "That incremental pressure has now left us, but we did staff up, we managed to get the incremental social workers we needed to handle that."

"The biggest problem during that period was finding foster placements and accommodation."

"Those challenges have now moved away and because we worked very hard lobbying central government to put in the dispersal programme, so for the past 14 months every young unaccompanied asylum seeking coming to Kent has been dispersed around the country, so we haven't had to take the incremental young people into our care, but what we have is the ongoing cost and pressures created by the legacy group."

"The big pressure we have today is them becoming care leavers, and they have different issues in terms of education, carrying on English as a second language, finding the right accommodation for them and supporting them until they're 23, or 25 in advanced education."

"Thus far the voluntary scheme has worked in keeping the numbers at bay. Our concern would be if the borders suddenly relaxed and we saw the influx that we saw in 2015, how the scheme would cope. We'd have to wait

and see if that ever happens again."

"That is why this is such a fabulous result for Kent because if you take all the asylum seekers, plus the other local authority children placed in Kent, plus our own 1,450 children in care, and all of the pressures and challenges that brings, we still delivered a very good service to the most vulnerable children in our society, and I just cannot over-emphasise the outstanding job our team have done in order to achieve that."

"There were dozens of cases where a social worker would get a call at 11pm, saying a child has turned up in the port, and somebody would have to go down there, take the child out of the port and find them accommodation."

"But we got through the challenges and everything worked out okay."

"This has to be our number one priority, we are corporate parents, we had to find the money during the problems, we did what we had to do and then we went to government and tried to recoup most of that money."

"Each year we've got virtually all of the money back from central government, minus two or three million pounds, so the Kent taxpayer had to subsidise it to that level."

"But we don't give up, we keep fighting government to recoup all the money owed to us."



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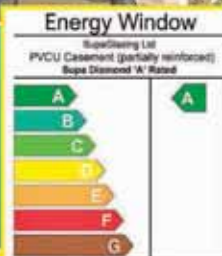


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KOS/15

14 Week ending June 18, 2017

# So just how did safe Tory city fall into hands of Labour?

It was one of the standout results of the general election and a masterstroke for activating the young student population. But, as activists tell us, there was more to it than just encouraging the universities to turn out and vote in numbers

**By Tom Pyman**

Tom.Pyman@archant.co.uk

**O**NE week on from the general election, the shock of Rosie Duffield's incredible win for Labour in Canterbury for the first time in the party's history can still be felt.

Held by the Conservatives for almost a century, and Tory stalwart Sir Julian Brazier himself for 30 years, Ms Duffield's slim majority of 187 votes was one of the most talked about across the nation.

When trying to dissect the surprise result in the immediate aftermath, commentators pointed to the strong student population in the cathedral city, which boasts two major universities, as photos circulated on social media of young voters queuing out the doors at their polling stations.

Likewise, a lot of the credit was attributed to party leader Jeremy Corbyn who had won the support of a number of popular celebrities and public figures, who were encouraging their strong youth following to vote red.

Despite being almost universally dismissed as "unelectable" when the snap election was first called earlier this year, Mr Corbyn is generally acknowledged to have fought a strong national campaign, resulting in Labour winning 30 more seats than it did under Ed Miliband's stewardship.

By contrast, a series of U-turns by Theresa May, along with her refusal to take part in televised debates compounded a dreadful campaign for the Conservatives, who won more seats than any other party, but are still in discussions about forming a government with the Democratic Unionist Party.

To overturn Sir Julian's majority of almost 10,000 from 24 months ago is a quite remarkable achievement, but Labour campaigners in Canterbury insist the quality of Ms Duffield as a candidate means it shouldn't have been that much of a surprise.

Leon Alleyne-McLaughlin is vice-chair of the Kent Labour Students society at the University of Kent, which has a campus in the city.

He told KoS: "I thought it was possible but I've got to concede I thought this time we'd get the majority under 5,000 and then take it off Brazier next time around, but I'm very happy to have been proven wrong.

"Before I was vice-chair, the CLP (constituency Labour party) and university society didn't really talk to each other, so that's something I tried to get - that unity of purpose in the cam-

paign, and turnout has been higher across the country, not just in Canterbury.

"It's helped having a candidate like Rosie, because the way she thinks of things is very much based on the benefit rather than some abstract idea. Rosie is a big part of it, because he had a 10,000 majority at the last election, and you can't turn that around just based on the national campaign."

Canvassers dressed smartly, a flood of Labour posters and plenty of activity all contributed.

Leader of the Labour group on Canterbury City Council, Alan Baldock, agreed the candidate herself played a big part in securing the necessary votes.

"We had a good campaign in Canterbury that was entirely positive, and an inspirational candidate," he said.

"Although of course we motivated many young people to vote, we had people of all ages who thought it was worthwhile voting for Labour.

"We overturned a 10,000 majority - you don't do that just with students.

"Rosie summed it up herself when she was asked what she would change in the manifesto and she said she liked all of it, and didn't want to cherry-pick.

"She is quite happy and comfortable with a left-wing agenda - we have said austerity has not worked, people are unhappy and have lost hope.

"Rosie is a person who can empathise with people very easily - she is from the University of Life."

Mr Alleyne-McLaughlin suggested the timing of the vote may also have helped spark increased turnout, with many students still back at home for the Easter holidays when elections are usually held in the first week of May.

Holding it in June instead meant it was easier to "mobilise" those still on campus - many of whom wanted to make a big statement following the Brexit result last year.

The university society has around 50 members but saw "a big expansion" of its campaign operation in the run-up to the election.

Mr Alleyne-McLaughlin said: "Even though there are only a few students who are hugely passionate about the EU, most students are generally pro-remain and it was made very clear it was a result of young people not voting, over-60s voting more and therefore young people not getting what they want, so there was a clear message that we have to take things into our own hands if we want change.

"It was not so much a rebellion, just a realisation - politicians don't listen to people who don't





**CREDIT:** Rosie Duffield was the right candidate to help swing it, say campaigners, but the impact of Jeremy Corbyn's policies and his ability to engage with the younger voter proved a recipe for success in Canterbury where Julian Brazier was brought crashing down.



vote."

Sir Julian was a prominent Brexiteer himself, but Mr Alleyne-McLaughlin suggested it was not just his record in that one vote that turned large numbers against him.

"It might have been anti-Brazier as well because it's difficult to find someone who is as regressive, for lack of a better term, than Julian Brazier," he

said.

"He voted for section 28 [of the Local Government Act which prevents the promotion of homosexual practises in sex education classes], he voted against its appeal, he voted against gay marriage, he voted against the ban on fox hunting, basically any piece of progressive legislation in the last 30 years, he's voted against it."

Indeed, Ms Duffield became the first constituency MP to attend the colourful Pride festival in the city last weekend, and received something of a hero's welcome as she took to the stage in Dane John Gardens to speak to thousands of visitors.

The question for Labour now, perhaps, particularly if the Tories struggle to form a sustainable government over

the coming days, weeks and months, is whether they can govern themselves.

Mr Corbyn has galvanised support across the country, with Labour's votes in Kent dramatically increasing, even though the Conservatives retained control of the other 16 seats in the county.

Whether he is the man to take them further, and back to Number 10, is an

other issue, however, and one that will continue to spark debate.

Mr Alleyne-McLaughlin voted for Mr Corbyn in the 2015 leadership election, but sided with Owen Smith - appointed this week to the shadow cabinet - when he was challenged last year.

*Continued on page 16*

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The 21-year-old history student insists he should remain in post following last week's result, and needs to both maintain the current level of support and build on it if Labour are to govern once again in the near future.

"My one worry would be that to go beyond this we'd need to appeal to people who normally vote Tory and I'm not sure if he can do that," he said.

"But to be fair I said he couldn't make a net gain in seats, so we'll see what happens."

"MPs in their constituencies and the national party needs to be banging on about increasing the youth vote quite hard, but there's something to be said for relying on it too much, having it become a crutch."

"When we're pushing on the youth vote, we need to be making - if not in policy at least in rhetoric - some concessions to people who would normally be on the centre-ground."

"That's not saying moving massively to the right with our policy platforms but we still need to do something about it."

Cllr Baldock added: "This is not the time for discussing the next leader."

"We have to make sure we don't crash into another election, which will be the last straw for most people - it's time we got on with governing."

"If you think of how many elections we've had in the last two years, there is voter fatigue and people have sent a message."

"The Conservatives never saw it coming but we read the message and responded to it."

"We have not reached our peak, we are truly a party that offers hope for the future and people are buying into that."



**CHANGE:**  
It's been blue for its history... until Labour claimed one of its most remarkable scalps this month

## DAMIAN GREEN GETS POWER POST

ASHFORD MP Damian Green was promoted to become the prime minister's second-in-command last weekend as Theresa May shuffled her cabinet.

The Conservatives won more seats than any other party with 317, but not enough to form a majority government, so are looking to be propped up by the Democratic Unionist Party, with

talks continuing over the coming days.

Nevertheless, Mrs May is putting together her top team, and while it remained largely the same as when she first took the keys to Number 10 last summer, she introduced a few changes.

Mr Green is a long-standing ally of the prime minister and takes on

the position of first secretary of state - to be effectively Mrs May's number two as the title is generally associated with the role of deputy prime minister.

The former work and pensions secretary will also take on the role of minister for the Cabinet Office.

Mr Green, 61, graduated from Oxford with Mrs May and worked as a journalist before becoming

an MP in the Kent constituency in 1997.

He eased to victory in last week's election, harvesting 35,318 votes, giving him a majority of almost 17,500 over his closest rival, Labour's Sally Gathern.

Meanwhile, returned Tunbridge Wells MP Greg Clark retained his post as business secretary in Mrs May's cabinet.

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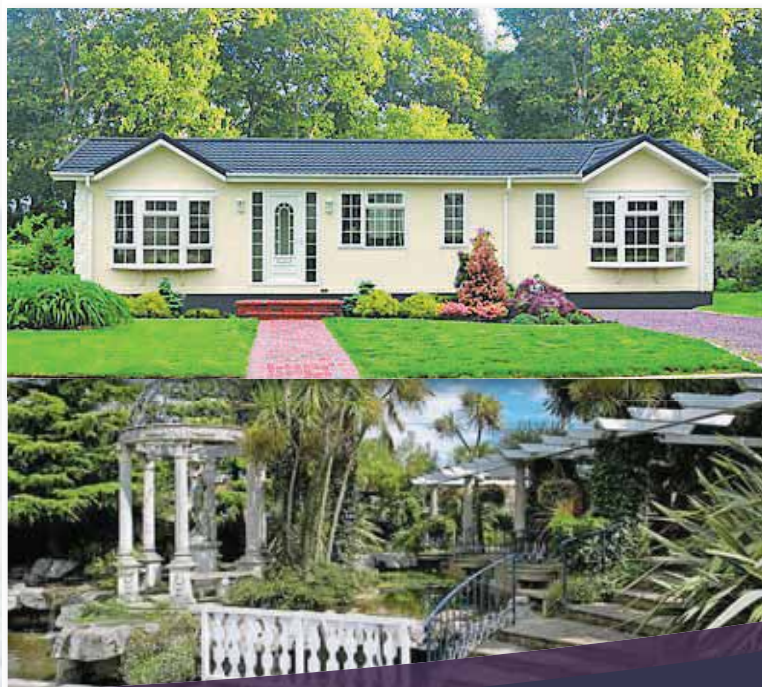
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**SUCCESS:** Sun shone and the crowds lapped up the music. Pictures: JACK THORNTON

# Gorillaz prove big hit as town hails a success

First big open air show in Dreamland was a test for Margate and it passed with flying colours

By Chris Murphy  
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

**M**ARGATE was celebrating this week after the first major outdoor concert at Dreamland passed off with none of the traffic chaos expected and with police reporting no arrests and no incidents.

The Demon Dayz one-day festival last Saturday was headlined by Gorillaz - a chart-topping band playing their first UK tour in seven years. Fronted by Blur singer Damon Albarn, all 15,000 tickets sold out in just 15 minutes.

But locals feared the event would cripple the seaside town with a host of road closures and tight traffic restrictions in place.

However, it proved a great success and paved the way for Dreamland to hold similar events.

Richard Ash is the chairman of the Margate Town Team, which speaks for local businesses. He told us: "It all went so well. We could not be more delighted.

"I was out driving in the area and never experienced any problems. This is the first time something like this has been put on locally, and I can genuinely say we are looking forward to the next one.

"There are always those that will knock something new, but truthfully this all went so well we want more events like this.

"There is always something that could have been done better, but learning these things is all part of gaining experience of staging something like this show.

"Next time, even those can be ironed out."

Local taxi companies were worried the town was going to become log-jammed. Before the event, Andy Doody from Thanet Private Hire Association said: "There is going to be approximately 15,000-plus people trying to get to the town and into the site which opens its doors to the public at 2pm and then come mid-

night a mass exodus - oh joy."

Kent Police said: "No arrests were made in connection with the event and we are not aware of any incidents."

Mr Ash said: "Events like this, far from creating chaos, are excellent for our local economy and long may they continue."

The show itself was blessed with good weather and the crowd treated to a show full of hits and new material. Among those appearing on stage were Albarn's Blur band mate, Graham Coxon, who lives near Canterbury, and Happy Mondays' frontman Shaun Ryder.

There will be another major event in Margate after The Libertines confirmed they will be headlining the By The Sea Festival at the end of September (see leisure pages for full details).



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# 14th century church uncovered

Archaeologists probing the ground upon which a new college building is to be created have yet again found a fascinating part of Canterbury's historic past - and there are now plans for it remain on show

By Tom Pyman

Tom.Pyman@archant.co.uk

**A**RCHAEOLOGISTS have uncovered the footings of an ancient church, dating back to the 14th century, on a university campus.

Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) excavated a site on Canterbury Christ Church University's North Holmes campus - where a £12m arts building is due to be built to support the region's creative art and digital industries - to ensure any Medieval, Anglo-Saxon and Bronze Age remains were protected.

During the dig, historians found the footings of the St Augustine's Abbey precinct wall and the university has since decided to celebrate its discovery within the state-of-the-art building, with plans to expose a section of the wall beneath the glass in the main reception.

A Benedictine monastery founded in 598, the ruins of St Augustine's Abbey in the cathedral city are now a World Heritage Site.

Dr Andy Seaman, a senior lecturer in post-Roman and medieval archaeology at CCCU, said: "As a medieval archaeologist myself, I am very excited about what the excavation tells us about the history of the abbey and the lives of its inhabitants."

"The excavation has also been fantastic for our students because it gives them an

opportunity to witness an excavation from beginning to end, enabling them to see how the techniques they learn in lectures are put into practice in the field.

"This will help them to prepare for when they go on their own excavation placements this summer."

James Revell and Nick Lawrence studied archaeology at the university and both started working for CAT after graduating in 2015.

They are now back on the North Holmes Campus to work on the site.

Mr Revell said: "I feel proud to be using my degree for what I aimed to become, especially with the Canterbury Archaeological Trust."

"I find it both brilliant and convenient that I have returned to my university to work."

"I am very pleased to have worked with my friend Nick and my tutor Andy on the site."

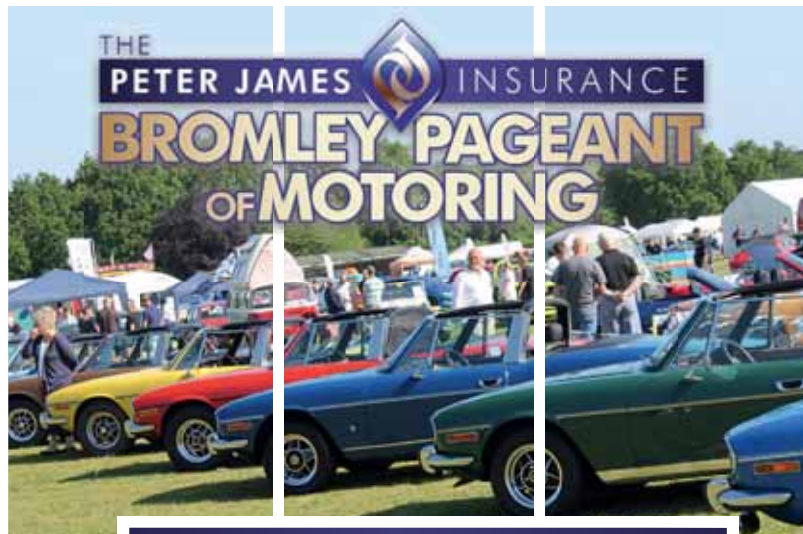
"Nick and I are learning a lot with CAT, it is nice to hear our tutors are proud of us for pursuing and achieving our goals."

The arts building will open in September 2018 and will be shared by the schools of media, art and design and music and performing arts.

The building will house specialist teaching facilities, including space for performance and music, design studios and the latest technology to support new and existing courses.



**FIND:** Nick Lawrence and James Revell discovering St Augustine's Abbey wall



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# Grammars face squeeze as demand leaps up from London neighbours

A leading education consultant says he is concerned over a sharp rise in the number of pupils attempting to appeal for a place in one of north Kent's selective schools this summer

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

**G**RAMMAR schools in north Kent are coming "under siege" from London families desperate to place their children at some of the county's top selectives, an education consultant has warned.

Figures obtained by former Gravesend head teacher Peter Read, and shared with KoS, suggest the number of appeals being heard at Wilmington Grammar School for Boys have increased dramatically on last year.

It is understood around 150 appeals are being heard this summer, - a significant rise compared to the 109 appeals reported in 2016, when just six of those were upheld.

A similar trend is also understood to be emerging at Wilmington

Grammar School for Girls as well as the two Dartford grammars.

Given their proximity to the capital, Mr Read - who runs the consultancy website kentadvice.co.uk - told us there was no doubt where the soaring numbers have come from.

"The reason behind it is absolutely clear - it's children from London seeking grammar school places in Kent," he said.

"Dartford Boys is also reporting similar figures - a lot of them are the same children because they want a place anywhere.

"The two girls' schools [in Dartford and Wilmington] are not quite as bad but equally under siege."

Mr Read believes the pattern extends to Gravesend and even as far as Chatham, but the numbers are particularly strong in Dartford, despite it being recognised as by far the toughest area in the county to win an appeal.

All children are entitled to make an appeal if they are not accepted by their chosen school, and these are currently ongoing at schools across the county, following the tests back in September.

However, given that right, an option hundreds appear to be taking up, the pressure is growing on those who voluntarily sit on panels and determine whether children are to be admitted to their preferred schools.

Mr Read says he fears the numbers are growing at such a rate that it cannot be sustainable in the long term, and that the system is destined to "break down" somewhere along the line.

"Volunteer appeal panellists can be hearing up to 15 appeals a day, for ten days," he said.

"Quite simply, the process, with a success rate likely to fall to less than five per cent for entry this summer, is



**WORRIED:** Peter Read is concerned over the increase in numbers

becoming unsustainable and pointless for the vast majority of appellants and these schools.

"The level of commitment from unpaid volunteers is utterly unreasonable, and I anticipate there

could soon be a mass refusal to undertake such enormous sessions, which surely offer so little satisfaction to those who offer their services."

He added: "Every child that takes the Kent Test is costing Kent County

## London South East Colleges: Opening doors to careers in Creative Media



Four passionate media enthusiasts, based at London South East College's Bexley Campus, are Ravensbourne-bound in September after the successful completion of their Creative Media Production BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma course.

*Maia, Isabel, Kara and Emma have been studying and working together as a team on the College's very own TV channel 'LSECTV' for the past three years. Now, the four friends from south east London are preparing to take the next steps in their careers together. All have been successful in winning a place at one of the country's most renowned digital media and design-focused university colleges this month.*

Ravensbourne has an impressive reputation for innovative, industry-focused professional and higher education courses and is located on the Greenwich Peninsula in East London.

**Maia, 19 from Erith will be studying for a BA (Hons) Editing and Post Production. She says:** "I am so happy about winning a place at Ravensbourne and even more delighted that my friends will be there with me. We've all been very supportive of each other and it's

great to know that we will all be in the same creative environment together for another three years. I can't wait to get started but it will be sad to leave LSEC."

**Keith Denham is the Media Technician at Bexley Campus and works closely with all of the creative media students. He says:** "Each year, we send our students off to a range of top quality universities and colleges specialising in the media. This year is no exception. By giving students the opportunity to work on their own TV channel we are equipping them with the practical 'hands-on' skills that you can't get by simply studying the subject at A level. Maia, Kara, Isabel and Emma were prime candidates to get into Ravensbourne due to the fantastic portfolios they have built up over two years. Needless to say, we are all very proud of them and wish them all the best for their future. I have no doubts they will all be successful."

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2 Walnut Tree Road, Erith DA8 1RA

**HOLLY HILL CONSTRUCTION CAMPUS**  
Sat 1 July - 10am to 1pm - Upper Holly Hill Road, DA17 6JG

**GREENWICH CAMPUS** - Thurs 29 June - 4pm to 7pm  
95 Plumstead Road, London SE18 7DQ

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Council money and suddenly it has gone mad - I was expressing concern about 100 appeals.

"This is not a joke, it's going to break down."

The four schools were contacted for comment but had not responded at the time of going to press.

Mr Read said he did not necessarily believe the spike in numbers could be linked to grammar schools appearing back at the top of the political agenda in recent months.

However, Theresa May's plan to open new selectives - not just in Kent, but nationwide - is unlikely to be implemented after she failed to win enough seats in last week's general election to secure a Commons majority, a senior Conservative suggested.

Graham Brady, who chairs the influential 1922 Committee of Tory backbenchers and is a prominent campaigner for more grammar schools, said his party could be forced to settle for introducing a "rather modest pilot" in place of its manifesto pledge to "lift the ban on the establishment of selective schools".

Discussions with the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) remain ongoing as Mrs May looks to get the majority she needs, after losing the cushion she inherited from David Cameron last year.

But with question marks over whether a deal will be struck with the DUP, the Conservatives may struggle to pass legislation, or even if they do, it is likely to be a lengthy process where all proposed laws are carefully considered to ensure they will be acceptable to

both the Northern Ireland party and to Tory backbenchers.

Chiefs warn that even a small rebellion could see the government lose crucial votes, meaning controversial policies like the prime minister's grammar plan, simply have to be considered under threat.

Speaking on the BBC's Sunday Politics, Mr Brady said: "There's no point in sailing ahead with items that were in the manifesto which we won't get through parliament, so we're going to have to work very carefully."

"No doubt it will be a slimmed down Queen's Speech and we should concentrate on the things that really have to be done."

"I would be upset if we couldn't make any progress on allowing people to have the choice of grammar schools but reality asserts itself. If we can't get things through parliament, we don't do them."

"I hope we won't have to stop altogether but certainly we are going to have to trim our policies carefully according to what we think parliament will support."

Earlier this year, former education secretary, Nicky Morgan, who gave the green light to plans for a grammar annexe in Sevenoaks just over 18 months ago, led a cross-party campaign to derail the expansion plan.

Along with Labour and Liberal Democrats chiefs, she argued that creating new grammar schools will do nothing to promote social mobility and warned there is no room for more "division or political ideology" in the education system.



**FUTURE:** Could the Conservatives' plan to breathe new life into grammar schools now be derailed?

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# How education can put your career on fast track to success

Changes in the economy has seen more and more adults look to change career path. But, for many, achieving the qualifications is necessary to open up those opportunities

**By Graham Razey**

Principal, East Kent College

**T**HE traditional 'job for life' as many people knew it is now a thing of the past, with the average UK worker changing their career six times according to a recent study commissioned by the Association of Accounting Technicians.

With that kind of nomadic workforce, adult education takes on a new importance, as members of our society look to develop existing skills, or perhaps re-train in new areas. In fact, the report highlighted that 46 per cent of people now completely re-train after deciding the area they work in is no longer for them.

But adult education isn't just rising in prominence due to a more fluid jobs market. With an ageing society, life-long learning also grows in importance. As we have fewer younger people, and a greater number of the workforce remaining in work for longer, it is imperative for employers to ensure their workforce is constantly developing, and for employees to develop their skills to remain relevant.

That becomes even more critical when the rapid pace of technological change is taken into account. There are a greater number of systems being used across all sectors, with organisations in a constant state of flux. The skills people learn today, are becoming obsolete within just a few years, rather than lasting a lifetime.

Adult education is also critical due



**AUTHOR:** Graham Razey

to the serious skills gaps which show no signs of abating. This is compounded by the fact that the CBI recently highlighted 69 percent of UK employers lack confidence they can fill highly skilled job vacancies in the near future.

This training can be delivered in a



range of ways, but there are debates over which is most effective, and which should be considered the gold standard in provision of lifelong learning.

So what are the main ways people are retraining? Adults looking to develop their skills, or retrain entirely tend to get that provision in one of

three main ways. These are via a college, through their workplace or using distance learning. While you'd expect me to promote the college option, the best provision depends largely on the person, and what they're looking to achieve.

Further education colleges have al-

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## ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES CAN OPEN YOUR EYES

EVER fancied learning how to cook the perfect curry, upcycle your old furniture or get the basics of first aid? Not for work, but for pleasure? If you have, then there's never been a better time for you to develop a new skill.

There are a range of short courses out there being offered by colleges across the county, which take advantage of the high quality skills of their tutors, while giving you access to state of the art facilities.

And most of these courses can be flexible, and tailored to fit

around you as the student. Some of them are also free. East Kent College recently offered some heritage construction courses which were funded as part of a partnership scheme with other organisations. The college is also currently running free digital skills courses for Kent's business community, with funding from the European Social Fund.

And more and more people are looking to develop these skills in their leisure time.

We're becoming a nation of entrepreneurs, with many attend-

ees at my colleges' courses looking to grow their skills, and then, perhaps develop a business in their chosen area. They also offer a great way to meet new people, and develop new relationships, helping connect those with same interests. There has also been a rise in leisure learning following programmes such as the Great British Bake Off, which have inspired people to develop a new skill.

It's a great thing to learn a new skill, and you never know, it could lead to a new career entirely.

Developing skills through lifelong learning in a college environment also ensures that there is consistency to teaching and assessment, with access to industry standard equipment. Adults who train in a college are also able to engage with their peers, as well as building networks in industry, which helps give a head start in their careers.

Colleges, though, are not the only place for people to retrain or develop existing skills. Distance learning is preferable for some, and particularly for those who want to retrain in an area which isn't currently offered by a local college. It's also helpful for those who are unable to get to a college for any reason, and is eminently flexible.

As there are no set times to do the learning, adults are able to fit their education around their own life. In many respects this can be the best option for those who are seeking to re-

train, but need to continue in employment. However, there are drawbacks for adults who use distance learning. It doesn't give access to industry standard equipment and that can be a real barrier to developing the skills which employers actually need. It can also inhibit networking, with adults unable to form industry relationships which are already in place in a college environment.

The last way most adults develop their skills as adults is through workplace training which is provided by their employer. This isn't retraining for a new career, but is upskilling so that they can become a more productive member of the workforce. There are some significant benefits for the employer and employee, with businesses not needing to backfill gaps caused by employees taking training courses. It is also useful as adults are

able to develop their skills in their workplace environment, using the same technology they'll use once their training finishes. That's great for those people happy in their career, but for those looking to make a complete change, workplace training's never going to work.

The answer to which type of lifelong learning delivery is best, is that it's a personal decision and one which is based on an individual's needs. In essence there can be no 'one size fits all' style of adult learning provision—each individual has different requirements from the course they choose, and the three different types all have their own strengths and weaknesses.

What can be said with certainty is that adult learning has never been more accessible, with a really wide range of high quality opportunities. If in doubt, contact your local college.

ways delivered vocational training, allowing professionals to upskill themselves in areas to benefit their workplace. In fact, most local colleges have teams dedicated to delivering bespoke training courses to meet the needs of employers, and also individuals who wish to develop their skill-

set. And for adults who want to change their career path entirely, there are a full range of courses offered by the colleges to choose from. The learning environment lends itself to adults who wish to retrain, with a feeling that's more akin to the workplace than the other options.

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# Board games' endearing magic

The likes of Monopoly and Cluedo aren't just for Christmas and to prove it, an exhibition from the V&A in London is setting up in Maidstone for the next few months. Make a move to go and see it

By Chris Murphy

THE video game is king when it comes to 'toys' most kids want, but they all have their roots in a much simpler time, when it was the roll of dice and the gentle and precise movement of a counter around a board.

Now Maidstone Museum has dedicated a substantial amount of floor space to a new travelling exhibition that was first seen at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.

It promises to have something for anyone aged six to 106 as it takes a trip through board game nostalgia with over 100 objects displayed chronologically.

They include Ludo sets from the 1920, Monopoly from the 1930s and Cluedo from the 1950s - providing a fascinating glimpse at how the packaging has evolved, yet fundamentally remained true to the original forms of the game.

Game Plan: Board Games Rediscovered, examines the way in which games have reflected the world around us and the importance of games and game playing in people's lives.

David Pickett, councillor of Maidstone Borough Council and chairman of the heritage, culture and leisure

committee, said: "This is a vibrant exhibition. For so many people, the art of playing board games is intrinsically linked to their youth and can leave long-lasting memories.

"This exhibition offers a real opportunity to people to indulge their love of their favourite games or perhaps be introduced to a completely new one in an interactive way."

Museums director Victoria Barlow added: "We are really looking forward to sharing this exhibition with everyone and hope visitors will come and celebrate the joy, excitement and occasional frustration of playing board games."

A museum spokesman added: "Alongside current family favourites such as Cluedo and Trivial Pursuit, and traditional games like chess, the exhibition will focus on the last 500 years from the first illustrated race game, the 16th century Game of Goose, to the most recent version of Monopoly.

"Visitors will also be able to get 'hands-on' throughout the exhibition, learn about different kinds of game and discover what sort of player they are."

The exhibition opens next Saturday, June 24, and runs until October 1. It is run by the V&A Museum of Childhood.

It costs £4 for adults, £3 for children, and £12 for a family of up to four people.



## EVOLVED:

From this Alice in Wonderland chess, left, to 1930s Monopoly and 1940s Cluedo above, we've always loved the simply joy of a board game

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# Festivals 2017: Your guide to a summer of fun and music

**W**HEN Glastonbury opens its gates the summer's festival season is finally under way and if the prospect of entertainment in the open air – come rain or shine – appeals to you, there's plenty of choices right on your doorstep.

Here are just a handful of the events in Kent this summer.

**By Chris Britcher**  
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

## Deal Festival of Music and the Arts

**When:** June 30-July 16

**Where:** Deal

**What:** A smorgasbord of classical and contemporary music from some of the

world's finest music-makers – plus a healthy dose of literature, theatre, opera, cinema, dance and the visual arts too.

Marking its 35th anniversary it pulls in an audience from far and wide and is hotly anticipated.

**More:** [www.dealfestival.co.uk](http://www.dealfestival.co.uk)

## Broadstairs Folk Week

**When:** August 11-18

**Where:** Broadstairs

**What:** Some events grow and evolve and as they do so they assume near mythical status. Such is the case with Broadstairs Folk Week which is now universally adored by all those that have attended.

With venues across the town, and all within walking distance, those who want to spend the night under canvas can camp too to ensure the authentic festival experience.

**More:** [broadstairsfolkweek.org.uk](http://broadstairsfolkweek.org.uk)

## Jam On The Marsh

**When:** July 6-16

**Where:** Romney Marsh

**What:** Described as 'multi-arts festival' JAM (which stands for the John Armitage Memorial Trust) is an annual event which this year features a little something for everyone. From early music such as Sounds Baroque

to the jazz of the David Rees-Williams Trio there are also performances from the BBC Singers, London Mozart Players and Onyx Brass. All performed at venues from Dungeness to Hythe.

**More:** [jamconcert.org](http://jamconcert.org)

## Sevenoaks Summer Festival

**When:** June 24-July 9

**Where:** Sevenoaks

**What:** Among the range of entertainment will be performances by legendary French pianist and composer Michael Legrand. Big band fans will be able to enjoy Back To Basie as they recreate The Atomic Mr Basie album, while Daniel Taylor will bring back to life the legendary comic and magician in The Tommy Cooper Show (main picture). They'll also be theatre and even a beer festival too.

**More:** [sevenoaksfestival.org.uk](http://sevenoaksfestival.org.uk)

## Whitstable Oyster Festival

**When:** July 22-24

**Where:** Whitstable

**What:** The annual knees-up in Whitstable shifts away from the town centre and its popular harbour in the direction of the picturesque Tankerton Slopes this year. There's still plenty to do for families with a host of free activities to enjoy, including a food fair, making of the grotters and the annual oyster eating competition. Expect



plenty of sun, sea and smiles - but with a far more relaxed atmosphere. One of the highlights will remain the traditional landing of the oysters, but in order to avoid traffic issues, the procession will head to Tankerton and the activity there, rather than into the town.

**More:** [whitstableoysterfestival.co.uk](http://whitstableoysterfestival.co.uk)

## LeeFest

**When:** August 10-12

**Where:** John Darlings Farm, Nr Tunbridge Wells



**TRADITIONAL:** Landing of the oysters at the Whitstable Oyster Festival.

Picture: JON LAMBERT

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[www.sevenoaksfestival.org.uk](http://www.sevenoaksfestival.org.uk)





**What:** Described as a 'mini version of Glastonbury' by Radio 1, LeeFest is back once more with more than 200 artists performing across 11 stages. Headliners include Jake Bugg and Annie Mac.  
**More:** [leefest.org](http://leefest.org)

#### Ramblin' Man Fair

**When:** July 28-30  
**Where:** Mote Park, Maidstone  
**What:** Get your denim and leather jackets out and get ready to rock. It's another big name festival for those who like their music heavy on gui-

tars, with the likes of ZZ Top, Extreme and Saxon headlining, plus a strong supporting line-up.  
**More:** [ramblinmanfair.com](http://ramblinmanfair.com)

#### Margate Soul Festival

**When:** August 4-6  
**Where:** Margate  
**What:** Staged at a host of venues around the town, there are a host of big names performing, among them 1990s stars Arrested Development, Trevor Nelson and Candi Staton. Let your hair down and enjoy the music.



**POPULAR :** Big crowds turned out last year for the New Day Festival.

Picture: ANDY ARCHER

**More:** [margatesoulfestival.co.uk](http://margatesoulfestival.co.uk)

#### Faversham Hop Festival

**When:** September 2-3  
**Where:** Faversham  
**What:** Celebrating the area's historic links to the hop industry, the Faversham event has grown into a hugely popular annual event which attracts thousands of people very year lured

in by food, drink and live music across the town.

**More:** [favershamhopfestival.org](http://favershamhopfestival.org)

#### A New Day Festival

**When:** August 25-27  
**Where:** Mount Ephraim Gardens, Faversham  
**What:** If prog, rock and blues are your thing, then you may have just

found your nirvana.

This three day festival has another star-studded line-up which includes the likes of Big Country, New Model Army, Uriah Heep and Dr Feelgood entertaining the crowds. Designed by fans, for the fans, the event has won plaudits and is set to be another big draw this summer.

**More:** [anewdayfestival.com](http://anewdayfestival.com)



### Box Office

Tel 01304 370220  
[www.dealfestival.co.uk](http://www.dealfestival.co.uk)  
 OR [www.theastor.org](http://www.theastor.org)

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Artists include: **Lucienne Renaudin-Vary and Purcell School Chamber Orchestra, Sarah Connolly, John Tomlinson, Courtney Pine, The Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain, The Moulettes, Julian Perkins, Ronnie Scotts Big Band, Academy of Ancient Music, Alex Rider, Scott Brothers Duo, Hamlet at Dover Castle, Castalian Quartet, Improviso, and Freddy Kempf with Wiener Kammerphonie**





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- 7 Theatrical Events Including Hamlet by Changling Theatre, The Looker by Sabotage Theatre
- 3 Poetry Recitals Gawain Douglas, Jonty Driver and John Doyle
- 2 Churches Tours Visit East Guldeford, Old Romney, Snave and Ivychurch with the Romney Marsh Historic Churches Trust  
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**HEADLINERS:** Margate has clinched another huge show later this year, hot on the heels of the Gorillaz performance last weekend

## Can't stop Dreamland now as The Libertines book date

Another major music event will be coming to the revived seaside venue in 2017

**F**OLLOWING the success of the Gorillaz one-day festival at Margate's Dreamland last weekend, the question was always going to be could they follow it up with similar big-selling, wide-appeal acts.

Just a few hours into Monday, they delivered the answer, as the venue unveiled The Libertines as headliners of the By The Sea festival which runs over the last weekend of September.

Given the band announced their reunion in 2014 with a headline show at Hyde Park, a sense of the scale of this latest booking should not be overlooked.

The Libertines will be playing Margate as part of a short tour of seaside venues.

Supporting them will be Mercury Prize-nominated Everything Everything, which feature Tunbridge

Wells-raised bassist Jeremy Pritchard, and Metronomy. More acts on the line-up are set to be added.

Now in its third year at Dreamland, Everything Everything will headline the Friday night with The Libertines providing the grand finale on Sunday.

Best known for hits such as Don't Look Back Into The Sun and Can't Stop Me Now, the band became almost as famous for the fall-out between frontmen Carl Barat and Pete Doherty as a result of Doherty's drug use which elevated him to a regular on the front pages of the tabloid press. Most infamously, Doherty broke into the home of close friend and songwriting partner Barat and stole musical equipment to fund drugs. He was jailed as a consequence.

He eventually went into rehab in 2014 to kick his reliance on drugs

once and for all.

The band's live shows since their reunion in 2014 have proved critical hits and earlier this year they started a show by allowing Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn on stage to address fans.

The By The Sea Festival bases most of its shows in and around Dreamland with the Hall By The Sea venue playing host to the majority of shows - a venue which in the past has hosted the likes of the Rolling Stones, The Who and T-Rex.

By The Sea's fringe programme will also spill across Margate during the weekend. Guests can start the day with a bracing swim at the Walpole Bay tidal pool or breakfast with DJs at Cliff's before heading to the old town for some intimate acoustic performances at the Margate Museum or cocktails and live music on the beach at

Nayland Rocks. After-parties will also run late into the night at a variety of local haunts.

A full supporting cast of artists and DJs will be announced soon.

It follows the success of the Demon Dayz festival last weekend which saw Gorillaz - led by Blur frontman Damon Albarn - headline their own one-day venue utilising the new outdoor 15,000-capacity venue.

With good weather and tightly controlled traffic around the venue, it proved a success (see page 19).

Tickets for By The Sea Festival went on sale on Friday with those living in the county given a pre-sale on the Wednesday. Be quick - the tickets are likely to sell out fast.

For full details and the line-up see [dreamland.co.uk](http://dreamland.co.uk).

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**BECKY**, 30 something lady. Full of laughter, very open minded and discreet. Hoping to meet similar minded gent who is older than me. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427495

**KATIE** 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+. Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3002 Box 419673

**MARGARET** is in her 60s, she's young looking, blue-eyed blonde, kind, loving with lots of qualities. Seeking mature gent for mutual life's pleasures. Please call me. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427493

**JANE**, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel: No: 0906 515 3010 Box: 409715

**CHRISTINE**, young looking 43yrs, kind with lovely blue eyes. Genuine, loving. WLTm gent with GSOH, must be older than me. Tel: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427491

**SOPHIA** young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: 0906 515 3018 Box: 413399

**HELLO**, I'm 58yrs and called Marie. I'm tall and seeking a man who likes to look at me. I am Black and very sensual. Call me. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427475

**KAREN**, late 50's seeking discreet gent any area/age for daytime meetings. Text Only. Box: 4194757

**EMILY**, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3002 Box 421375

**JANE**, mature blonde lady, loves jokes, countryside, driving, cosy nights in. I'm solvent and seek a gent 70+. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427473

**TAMIKKA**, mature black beauty, hourglass figure and open minded. Pls call if you are discreet, broad minded and nice. I can travel and accommodate. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3006 Box 422365

**TRUDY**, 70 something lady seeks gent. I'm broadminded and will respond to all calls. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427471

**SAMANTHA**, 35yrs, attractive brunette with own business, seeks adventurous gent for casual relationship. Tel: 0906 515 3034 Box 425979

**SUSAN**, 72yrs, divorcee, tall, slim and attractive. Seeking gent for lunches, friendship, leading to more. I'm solvent with my own home. Tel: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427343

**HARRIET**, 42yrs, blue eyed brunette with long lets and decent curves! Looking for a cheeky adventurous man for fun only. I live alone so can accommodate and can travel. Discretion assured. ACA. Give me a try. Tel: 0906 515 3030 Box 426205

**OLIVIA**, very mature but young at heart lady seeks nice gent for winning, dining more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427309

**PAT**, 72yrs, attractive blue-eyed lady, good for her age! Varied interests. Looking for gentleman companion. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427313

**JULIE**, 68yrs but very fit and young looking. Married to an older gent so hoping to meet someone much much younger. Text Me. Text Only: 4193435

**JEANIE**, 67yrs easygoing happy widow. Call if you are interested in chatting to me or meeting for a meal. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427315

**JOAN**, black lady young looking 50yrs, loves life. Call to hear more and perhaps meet up. ACA Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427317

**FELICITY**, "my friends call me posh" I'm not really. Call me to see. I'm 58yrs, curvy, blonde extensions and very good for my age. ACA. Text Only. Box: 4043583

**CARMEL**, open minded naughty lady, originally from Scotland, petite and shy. WLTm sensitive male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427319

**JANET**, late 40's divorcee, own home and car looking to spice up my life with some fun. Discreet men only please, I'm not ready for a full on relationship, casual chats. Text Only. Box: 4189331

**SASHA** 44yrs feminine attractive lady, loves nights out, cosy nights at home. Call me if you are interested in me. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427335

**MARGARET**, late 60s widow who looks much younger! Blue eyed blonde, varied interests, solvent. WLTm n/s gent who is down to earth. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427339

**SANDRA** but call me Sandy. I'm 62yrs young petite dark haired smart lady with curves. Hoping to meet a gent who is kind with GSOH Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427341

**PIA**, Asian lady, 57yrs, very caring and a little subservient and quiet. I am a good cook and loyal friend. Pls text me if you are kind man 55+ Text Only. Mailbox 4013378

**CALLING** all Muslim men. I'm Margaret 41yrs. I can accommodate and travel, daytime fun. I'm discreet. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427311

**NATALIA**, black beauty! I am late 50s but still fit with a good figure and lovely skin and eyes. I would like to meet a nice white gentleman, older than myself for chats, maybe more. Text Only. Mailbox 4107799

**LOCAL** 70 year old young man, now single, nice appearance and dresser, looking for fun and friendship with a lady, 55-70, possible holidays. Can travel. Please ring. Tel: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426897

**LIVELY** mature gent, OHAC, near sea in Folkestone, into red wine, garlic and Radio 3, seeks lady companion/lover, 58-68 yr. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426221

**WELL** off man, wanting a young lady for spoiling. I am a sugar daddy looking for a sugar baby. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427441

**JERRY**, 66, brown hair, brown eyes, recently widowed, love to walk my dog, WLTm compatible lady for companionship and to see where things go. Tel: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426387

**ELAINE**, 54yrs attractive brunette lady, originally from Scotland, petite and shy. WLTm sensitive male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427319

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**ATTRACTIVE** Caribbean lady 59yrs, very jolly and fun seeking gent any age who must love good times. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 425323

**LADY**, 70, 5ft6, divorced, blonde hair, brown eyes, friendly, lives in the Kent area, likes walking, holidays, WLTm somebody for friendship in the local area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426193

**CAROLINE**, attractive mature lady, various interests, hoping to meet a smart gent for socialising, perhaps leading to something more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426347

**JOY** happily married, but curious, blonde hair, blue eyes, big boobs, seeks someone to join in a bit of bedroom fun! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426845

**BRUNETTE** lady, 70, slim, sophisticated, size 10, kind of like Helen Mirren as a brunette, lives near Tunbridge Wells, WLTm a genuine, hopefully family oriented gentleman, for genuine friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424877

**CARING**, sociable, GSOH, slim, attractive, married, 67, feels discarded and lonely, seeks likeable lady 60+ for trips out, dining etc. Text only. Mailbox: 5082918

**SIX** foot guy, mature, looking for someone special to spend some quality time with. Please leave me a message I would love to hear from you! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420163

**CARING**, sociable male, 72, N/S, likes all types of music, walking, meals out, looking for a lady for friendship at first. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426865

**KENT** man, retired engineer, solvent, enjoys holidays, meals out, good conversation, WLTm a slim lady, 60-70, with a GSOH, to share these times and hopefully become friends. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426887

**RETIRED**, smart, 68 year old, 5ft5, I enjoy eating out, walking, holidays and golf, WLTm a slim, attractive lady, 60-68, for a loving, tender relationship, to enjoy these times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421853

**MALE** divorced, 6ft, well built, seeking fun time girl for good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412717

**HARRY** 50, ex soldier, 6ft, well built, seeking lady to wine and dine. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417015

**50YR** old divorced white male, passionate, strong, seeking caring lady for romantic, loving relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418641

**BARRY**, 50, 6ft 4ins, well built, divorced gent, looking to date calm and kind lovely lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421195

**GUY**, 50, 6ft tall, calm and kind, good company, seeking lovely lady for good times and fun and loving. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 425369

**MALE**, 70s, would like to meet slim lady 60 plus. Text only. Mailbox: 4505135

**LOCAL** man, seeks lady for friendship possibly more, for romantic dates and good times together, hope to hear from you. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426195

**HANDSOME** male, mid 40s, dark hair, hazel eyes, wishes to meet appropriate female for fun, friendship and perhaps more, please get in touch if interested. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422587

**MALE**, 55, looking for no strings attached friendship, with a lady 60-70, any status. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426133

**MALE**, 6ft, brown hair and blue eyes, warm and understanding, likes dining out and cosy nights in, lots of fun, friendship and holidays. Looking for a lady over 48. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426057

**EASYGOING** male, 49, 6ft, well built, seeks female to wine/dine and have fun times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 401401

**CARING** married, GSOH, slim, attractive, sociable, 67, feels discarded and lonely, seeks likeable lady 60+ for trips out, dining etc. Text only. Mailbox: 5082918

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**MALE**, 55, looking for no strings attached friendship, with a lady 60-70, any status. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426133

**MALE**, 6ft, brown hair and blue eyes, warm and understanding, likes dining out and cosy nights in, lots of fun, friendship and holidays. Looking for a lady over 48. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426057

**EASYGOING** male, 49, 6ft, well built, seeks female to wine/dine and have fun times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 401401

**CARING** married, GSOH, slim, attractive, sociable, 67, feels discarded and lonely, seeks likeable lady 60+ for trips out, dining etc. Text only. Mailbox: 5082918

**SIX** foot guy, mature, looking for someone special to spend some quality time with. Please leave me a message I would love to hear from you! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420163

**CARING**, sociable male, 72, N/S, likes all types of music, walking, meals out, looking for a lady for friendship at first. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426865

**KENT** man, retired engineer, solvent, enjoys holidays, meals out, good conversation, WLTm a slim lady, 60-70, with a GSOH, to share these times and hopefully become friends. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426887

**RETIRED**, smart, 68 year old, 5ft5, I enjoy eating out, walking, holidays and golf, WLTm a slim, attractive lady, 60-68, for a loving, tender relationship, to enjoy these times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421853

**MALE** divorced, 6ft, well built, seeking fun time girl for good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412717

**HARRY** 50, ex soldier, 6ft, well built, seeking lady to wine and dine. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417015

**50YR** old divorced white male, passionate, strong, seeking caring lady for romantic, loving relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418641

**BARRY**, 50, 6ft 4ins, well built, divorced gent, looking to date calm and kind lovely lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421195

**GUY**, 50, 6ft tall, calm and kind, good company, seeking lovely lady for good times and fun and loving. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 425369

**MALE**, 70s, would like to meet slim lady 60 plus. Text only. Mailbox: 4505135

**LOCAL** man, seeks lady for friendship possibly more, for romantic dates and good times together, hope to hear from you. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426195

**HANDSOME** male, mid 40s, dark hair, hazel eyes, wishes to meet appropriate female for fun, friendship and perhaps more, please get in touch if interested. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422587

**MALE**, 55, looking for no strings attached friendship, with a lady 60-70, any status. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426133

**MALE**, 6ft, brown hair and blue eyes, warm and understanding, likes dining out and cosy nights in, lots of fun, friendship and holidays. Looking for a lady over 48. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426057

**EASYGOING** male, 49, 6ft, well built, seeks female to wine/dine and have fun times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 401401

**CARING** married, GSOH, slim, attractive, sociable, 67, feels discarded and lonely, seeks likeable lady 60+ for trips out, dining etc. Text only. Mailbox: 5082918

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**LOCAL** man, seeks lady for friendship possibly more, for romantic dates and good times together, hope to hear from you. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426195

**HANDSOME** male, mid 40s, dark hair, hazel eyes, wishes to meet appropriate female for fun, friendship and perhaps more, please get in touch if interested. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 42



# Soap star to be crowned our Prince Charming in pantomime

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

**E**ASTENDERS and Hollyoaks heart-throb Stefan Booth has confirmed he will be stepping into the shoes of Prince Charming during pantomime season in Maidstone later this year.

He will perform in Cinderella at the Hazlitt Theatre.

Best known for playing Greg Jessop in Walford Square - finance of Tanya Branning - he was also serial heartbreaker Jamie Nash in the Channel 4 soap drama.

Previous to that, he found fame as Marc Rollins in ITV's long-running cop show The Bill.

No stranger to the stage, he's recently toured Europe and the UK with hit musical Chicago, in which he played smooth-talking lawyer Billy Flynn. He has also been a regular in recent years on the pantomime circuit.

Now he'll be wooing the crowds at the Hazlitt during the panto's run from December 1-31.

Martin Cleverly, general manager at the theatre, said: "Stefan will join a fantastic cast including Rustie Lee this year for our produc-

tion of Cinderella. He has a wealth of experience both on stage and TV and will be part of making Cinderella the most magical pantomime in Maidstone this year."

Rustie Lee is best known as a morning TV chef back in the 1980s with a distinctive laugh, but has since extended her career, appearing in a host of TV and stage productions. She was recently in the Bafta-nominated Real Marigold Hotel TV series.

Back in 2011, Stefan Booth found himself skating to impress on ITV celebrity talent show Dancing on Ice.

But he proved impressive in that too - coming runner-up.

He said he was "delighted" at landing the Hazlitt Theatre role.

"It will be great to work at the theatre with Parkwood Theatres," he explained. "It promises to be a magical few weeks working with some wonderfully talented people."

Parkwood Theatres runs the Hazlitt in co-operation with Maidstone Borough Council.

Tickets for the pantomime are already on sale and cost £20 each. To book or for more details, visit the theatre's website at hazlitttheatre.com or call the box office on 01622 758611.



**ROLE:** From Hollyoaks and EastEnders, Stefan Booth is coming our way later this year

## Circus is coming to town

MOSCOW State Circus will be at a host of Kent sites over the summer.

It will be in Deal's Victoria Park, Folkestone's Radnor Park and Dunorlan Park in Tunbridge Wells.



## Cara strum up a big night

IRISH band Cara will be performing at the Gulbenkian on the University of Kent campus in Canterbury on June 23.

Promoting album Yet We Sing, the Scottish and German group's show begins at 7.30pm and tickets are on sale now, priced at £15 or £10 for students.

## Castle's blooming great

HEVER Castle's annual gardening event from June 26 to July 2 will celebrate literary heroes of the last 200 years.

Hever in Bloom will include poetry and famous literary quotes among the flowers.



## YouTube hit signing books

YOUTUBE sensation Bethany Mota, who boasts some 25 million followers, will be at Bluewater shopping centre on July 1 signing copies of her new book Make Your Mind Up.

She will be at the Waterstones store in the West Village at 2pm.

Tickets at waterstones.com/events.



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## Tiger unveils major UK tour

A STAGE production of classic book *The Tiger Who Came To Tea* is heading back to Kent for shows in Tunbridge Wells, Bromley, Margate and Dartford in a major UK tour. For details: [TigersTeaLive.com](http://TigersTeaLive.com).



## Duo's magical night of fun

MAGICIANS Morgan & West head into Deal's Astor Theatre on July 7 with their critically acclaimed Parlour Tricks show.

The pair were recently on ITV1's *The Next Great Magician* talent show and have performed to sell out crowds around the world.

The Deal show tickets are on sale now.

## Brand tickets selling out

THE final few tickets for Russell Brand's *d Re:Birth* show at Tunbridge Wells' Assembly Hall Theatre in September are fast selling out.

The controversial comedian's there on September 20.



## Sister Act hits the stage

X FACTOR star Alexandra Burke brings *Sister Act*, the musical, to Canterbury's The Marlowe Theatre next week.

The show, based on the smash movie hit starring Whoopie Goldberg and choreographed by Craig Revel Horwood, plays at the venue from June 26 to July 1.

# Music, comedy, theatre and beer for festival

By Chris Britcher

[chris.britcher@archant.co.uk](mailto:chris.britcher@archant.co.uk)

A HOST of entertainment will be spilling out into the streets later this month at the Sevenoaks Festival returns.

Running from June 24 until July 9, the event is now in its 48th year.

Among the range of entertainment will be performances by legendary French pianist and composer Michael Legrand. Big band fans will be able to enjoy Back To Basie as they recreate The Atomic Mr Basie album, while Daniel Taylor will bring back to life the legendary comic and magician in The Tommy Cooper Show (main picture).

The Demon Barbers play the John Smedley Folk Memorial Concert and The Alan West Trio headline An Evening of Acoustic Americana Music, supported by Canadian songstress Amelia Curran.

An early highlight is a double-bill of Buster Birch's jazz accompaniments to Buster Keaton's silent film *Steamboat Bill Jr* preceded by a compilation film of Keaton's comi-tragic life.

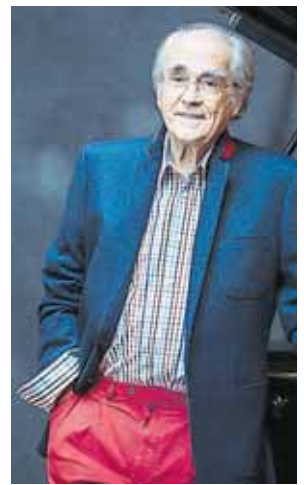


Alongside the professional offerings, community groups' events feature prominently throughout the 16 days including the combined talents of Sevenoaks Philharmonic Society and Sevenoaks Symphony Orchestra with A Night at the Opera, open air performances of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and a beer festival at The Vine Cricket Club.

Other events promoted by groups in the town include *Untouchable* – a French film with English subtitles presented by the

Kent International Club, Stag Theatre Company's *Death by Fatal Murder*, and several varied live music offerings in The Anchor, the Stag Plaza, Knole Academy's Oaks Theatre and on the Vine Bandstand.

For full details of the line-up, visit the festival's website at [sevenoaksfestival.org.uk](http://sevenoaksfestival.org.uk). Or contact the box office at the Stag Theatre on 01732 450175 or through [www.stagsevenoaks.co.uk](http://www.stagsevenoaks.co.uk). Tickets for the majority of the events are on sale now.



**FRENCH:** Pianist Michael Legrand will be performing



**LOGO:** Festivals runs over 16 days from the end of June

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# How TV garden show grew into a phenomenon

As Gardeners' World celebrates its 50th anniversary, **Hannah Stephenson** looks back at its impact

**I**T started as a seed of an idea when colour TV was coming in and gardening was considered a fantastic subject for it - and has gone on to produce vast harvests of information for gardeners worldwide.

Now, Gardeners' World is celebrating its 50th year with anniversary events at BBC Gardeners' World Live at Birmingham's NEC (June 15-18), which features an anniversary garden. Plus, there's a special feature in this month's edition of Gardeners' World magazine - but the celebrations will no doubt continue long after that.

The BBC Two show has grown to become a mainstay of British gardening TV, capturing on camera how

trends have changed over the years, from formal bedding of the Sixties and Seventies, to naturalistic planting and wildlife-friendly spaces of the Eighties, outdoor rooms and decking of the Nineties, robotic mowers and 'grow your own' resurgence of the 2000s, to the climate change-conscious, wildlife-friendly plantings for smaller spaces in recent years.

"Over the last 50 years, Gardeners' World has reflected the changes in society at large - it's gone from being presented by Percy Thrower in a shirt and tie, to Monty Don's much more relaxed attire. It's changed the advice it gives in line with current thinking and research - no more chemical solutions for example, now it's all about working with nature rather than



**LEGEND:** Percy Thrower was first presenter of the show

against it," says Paolo Pronto, executive producer of the show.

"The production process has changed radically. It used to be shot by a huge team with large TV trucks full of heavy machinery, who stopped for a proper sit-down lunch hosted by Percy.

"Nowadays, a small team using the very latest technology deliver stunning photography with an array of high-tech equipment that would have left the original production team baffled.

"But despite the changes in technology, the clothes and attitude to chemicals, at its core Gardeners' World still does what it set out to do 50 years ago and that is to celebrate gardens and plants, and to inspire

people to go outside, get in the garden and have a go."

For current presenter Monty Don, it was one presenter in particular who fired his imagination.

He explains: "Geoff Hamilton was my first recollection of Gardeners' World. Geoff was an inspirational figure for me.

"I liked the way he was organic, the fact he took issue over the limestone pavements and peat debate. As a public figure, I think he was very brave.

"Everything you do is scrutinised and so to stand up and say something like he did was very brave.

"I think he saw organics as a personal journey and he was evangelical about it... and for quite a long time, he'd give you both options."

## Austen's heroines

**GRAVESEND's** Woodville Theatre will celebrate heroines of the author Jane Austen on June 27.

Austen's Women is written and performed by Rebecca Vaughan and will see 13 of her creations brought to life on the stage - among them Emma Woodhouse, Lizzy Bennet, Mrs Norris, Miss Bates and nine others in critical moments from Austen's major novels. Tickets on sale now.

## Art club's big showcase

**THE** Tonbridge Theatre and Arts Club hosts its annual art exhibition at the Oast Theatre next month.

The Janet Young Room at the London Road venue will play host to the event which attracts well over 100 paintings and also other works from about 40 artists.

It runs from July 22 to 29. To check for opening times and details visit oasttheatre.com/art-group.

## Create Platform arrives

**THE** team behind Ashford's popular free Create Festival has branched out with a new week-long programme of events leading up to the big day on July 22.

Create Platform will see an eclectic mix of spin-off events from July 14-23 from exhibitions to concerts to street entertainment.

For full details of the events and the festival, headlined by ska legends The Selecter visit createfestival.co.uk.

## Snappy summertime

**BUDDING** photographers are being encouraged to capture Medway during a jam-packed summer of fun celebrating what the area has to offer.

Medway Council's photography competition wants entrants showing off the towns at their best.

Images can be submitted to @Enjoy\_medway on Instagram using #MyMedway. Or post them to the council offices.

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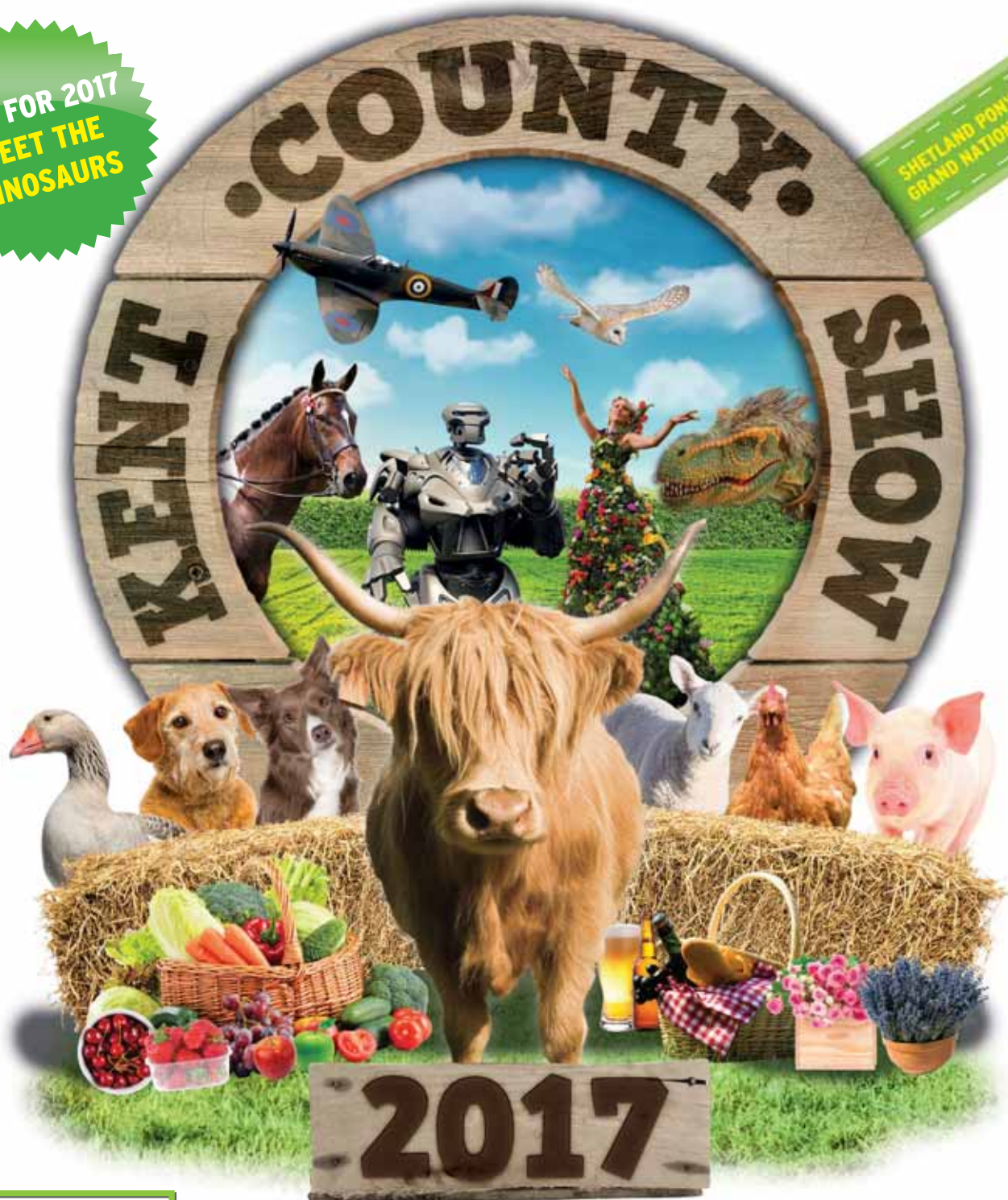
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## Who can resist a blue lagoon?

It's well known for its superb scenery, but Iceland is also a great option for a mind and body break. Erin Cardiff prepares to wind down in the land of fire and ice

There is a word in Icelandic – gluggaveður – that literally translates as window weather. You know: the type that's bracingly cold to be out in but comforting to watch from behind a pane.

I think about it as I sit in the glass-fronted Northern Lights Bar of ION Adventure Hotel – an hour out of Reykjavik – looking out at the almost lunar landscape.

Sure enough, a feeling of cosy contentment washes over me and, in that moment, I know that when it comes to wellness breaks, there's no better destination than Iceland.

Though Reykjavik – the country's capital – is only a three-hour flight from London Gatwick, it may as well be a different world. The remarkably flat landscape stretches for miles in

every direction.

It's barren without being boring. And being somewhere so vast is oddly calming.

With so much natural beauty on offer, the perfect way to unwind in Iceland is to spend some time in the great outdoors – or several hundred metres beneath it.

I drive half an hour out of Reykjavik to embark on the world-famous Inside the Volcano tour. It starts with a 3km trek across a lava field, and with thick fog hanging in the air, I can't even see the dormant Thrihnukagigur volcano until I'm mere metres away.

I'm attached to a rope and harness before climbing into the window-cleaner-style lift that takes me down to see the inner workings of the earth. After a six-minute descent, we're

underground. Though it's still only 4C, it's warmer down here and silent. Strategically-placed lights illuminate the rich colours of the jagged rocks which were once magma.

I'm told by a guide that the chamber I stand in is roughly the size of three full basketball courts, and that the Statue of Liberty would comfortably fit here. This far below the world's surface, everyday stresses seem so far away.

■ Horse-riding soothes the soul One of the oldest (and unique) breeds in the world, Icelandic horses are famed for their strength and stamina. Tour company Solhestar takes me on an hour-long ride through a cluster of craters in a 5,200-year-old lava field

known locally as the Raudholar (Red Hills).

Our pace is slow and steady as we journey round winding paths and through shallow pools. Even though we're right on the doorstep of the bustling capital, the serene landscape can't help but inspire a feeling of relaxation.

■ Geothermal baths are pure bliss No visit to Iceland is complete without a trip to the Blue Lagoon. Just 15 minutes from Keflavik airport, it's an ideal entry – or, in my case, exit – point to the island. One of the country's top attractions, it hosts up to 4,000 people a day.

As I float in the 38C waters, rich in natural minerals like silica and

sulphur, a complimentary mud mask smeared across my face, I reflect on my time in Iceland. I think about Huldúfolk, the mythical elfish creatures who many locals consider to be fact rather than folklore. I smile to myself as I realise that, after only a few days here, I believe a little more in magic too.

■ How to get there Iceland Beyond offers a four-day/three-night itinerary from £1,990 per person (two sharing). Includes B&B accommodation at the ION Adventure Hotel and Alda Hotel, all activities and private luxury transportation. Flights from London Gatwick to Reykjavik cost from £34.99 per person with WOW air.



THE GULLFOSS WATERFALL IN THE GOLDEN CIRCLE.  
PICTURE: PA

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The beautiful Suffolk coast is the location for Corton Coastal Village which has all the easy atmosphere of a holiday home, and the creature comforts Warner is famous for. Built on a chalet theme, the rooms have clapboard design, with fresh pastel interiors, and many have terraces overlooking the sea. Our 60s Sounds party weekend - for over 40s only - is packed with entertainment. We've lined up a brilliant showbill featuring 60s bands Union Gap UK, the New Honeycombs and Roy Carter (ex-Drifters & Foundations). With non-stop entertainment from Friday evening to Sunday evening and free drinks every night, this is going to be a party weekend to remember.

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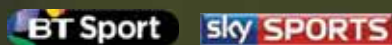
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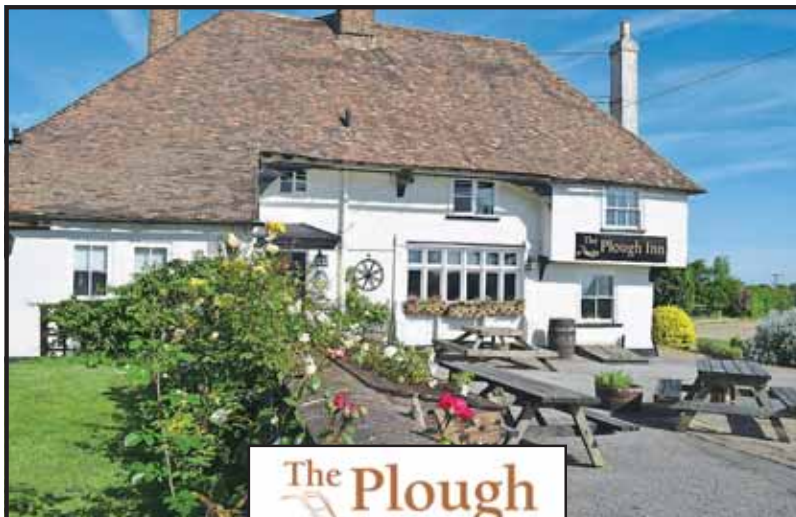
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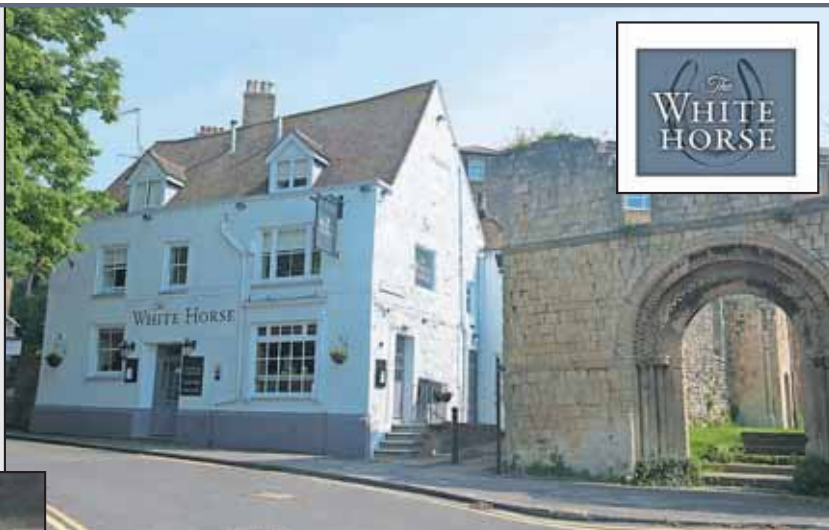
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Photo credit for [www.jpetersphotography.co.uk](http://www.jpetersphotography.co.uk)



Hours can be spent reading over the names & times. A hidden terrace garden sits to the rear with the spectacular backdrop to the ruins of St James Church which overlooks this sun trap garden. The perfect place to sip one of their extensive range of extravagant gins. Trip Advisor recommendations ensure a continued stream of hungry & thirsty visitors to enjoy this historic grade 2 listed public house.

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Please include your name and  
 address, although these will be  
 withheld in exceptional  
 circumstances, and a daytime  
 phone number for verification  
 (this will not be published). We  
 reserve the right to edit all letters.

## Tories must wake up to east Kent

YET again the public have literally thrown the constitutional system a 'leftie' and the Tory party is not happy.

From all the squabbling we have heard from the governing party, you would have thought they had lost the election. Yet in fact they have the most MPs and scored a 30 year high in terms of the share of the vote. The Labour Party did not implode, but at best it may have achieved a fighting score draw.

Theresa May gambled on a thumping majority and, because of her own failings as a campaigner, came unstuck. A safe pair of hands would have recognised her limitations and got in a capable campaign team to run the campaign, thus avoiding beating up on your core supporters and delivering a poor media response; which allowed Jeremy Corbyn to spread reasonable doubt on Mrs May's capabilities.

That she chose poorly merely shows that she was not made of the right stuff; but who else is there, who is not equally unfit to lead? Boris or David Davis but are they any better?

More importantly, the majority of the electorate (especially in Kent) held their noses, lent their vote to Team Theresa and in exchange got a DUP/Tory coalition for their pains. Hardly the result they were asked to give their support to in the first place.

Locally, I think we must examine the sclerotic democratic process, where the same incumbents (Canterbury excepted) are returned time after time, with only an active student movement or an act of God able to make any changes.

Where is the chucking out of the scoundrels element in the local democratic process? This leads to complacency (Crispin Blunt MP even complained that the electorate had 'got it wrong') and a 'business as usual' complacency, in local, county and national affairs.

This would be ok, if Kent received the same care and attention as Northern Ireland, which has a similar population and similar problems at least as far as some coastal parts of Kent are concerned.

I bet you we get the same poor deal and lack of investment as we have always received from successive governments over the last 40 years.

It's time we had some control of our local economy, with a line of credit and grant funding appropriate to the problem at hand; not insignificant sums and a promise of jam tomorrow which never happens.

Perhaps the occasional defenestration of incumbents will encourage our representatives to do rather better; after all there are more than 10 of them and therefore if they act

## LETTER OF THE WEEK



## Tories got just what they deserved in poll

THAT was the best general election outcome all things considered.

The shock, then celebration as the exit poll was revealed will live long in the memory.

Even better, as at time of writing Theresa May continues to operate in sheer denial, even though her authority is gone and her totally unwarranted reputation is shot to pieces.

Mrs May's desperate attempts to govern with help of the odious DUP guarantees the process of Tory re-toxification. It also jeopardises the Good Friday Agreement.

But what do the Conservatives really care about national security, eh?

All these things are a head smashing irony given the robotic messaging from the dreadful Tory campaign about 'coalitions of chaos' and the daily smearing of Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn as a terrorist sympathiser.

Let's be frank here: we are witnessing the truth of Tory rule.

It is they, not Labour, that has destabilised the country.

From austerity, to the EU referendum, to this unnecessary and unwanted general election.

Here in Kent, Canterbury's swing to Labour [Julian Brazier lost seat he had held for 30 years after 10,000 majority was overhauled] was the premier symbol of how the young this time came out and blunted the attack on them by the reactionary forces of conservatism. Congratulations to those student voters and the local Labour voters there.

This time all the fear and negativity pumped out by the Tory press was rightfully ignored.

Let's hope that trend continues as we head towards the inevitability of another general election.

And let's hope when in the booth again, that voters remember which party is responsible for dragging them there, and punish them for it.

**Ben Murphy**  
 Sittingbourne

in concert, Kent should get a better share of the investment cake.

Unfortunately this is not happening at the moment, with the result that east Kent is not as prosperous as other parts of Kent. With the significant internal migration planned for east Kent over the next 10 years (local development plans to you and me), this disconnect may not be sustainable and finally the additional electorate in the east may lose patience and apply their own rough justice a la Canterbury to those who grandstand but do little more.

Those elected should ponder on this and apply their collective will on

central government so that east Kent is in a happier place.

**George Nokes,**  
 Dover

## Students were duped by Labour

I WAS stunned and saddened by the profound lack of understanding shown by four young people from the universities in Canterbury on a TV interview as to why they voted Labour; abolishment of tuition fees, the NHS, shortage of police and care for the elderly.

Only a successful economy can generate the wealth to allow people to have jobs and prosperity and for the government then to have the financial resources to fund world class public services.

These young people need to see there is no magic money tree but it is enterprise and hard work that is the backbone of our nation and without prosperity, society breaks down and public services collapse.

As for tuition fees, cloud cuckoo land and another cheap stunt from Labour to get the student vote.

**Peter Booth,**  
 Former chair South Thanet  
 Conservative Association

## Will we get same treatment as NI?

RECENTLY, you kindly published a letter from me about the difficulty of getting registered with a GP in Ramsgate [KoS, letters 04.06].

Since then, we have had the result of the general election. Given the outcome, it appears that the Conservatives are likely to rely on support from the Democratic Unionist Party. Billions of pounds of additional government money will doubtless be directed at Northern Ireland in return.

This is in addition to the billions that already go to Scotland, where expenditure is over a thousand pounds a year more per person than in England, being spent on things like free university tuition and social care.

The preferential treatment of Scotland and Northern Ireland shows our national leaders can come up with money when they want to.

It is about time that Kent and Medway were treated comparably with Scotland and Northern Ireland, with additional money for GPs and at least one major new hospital.

**Frederic Stansfield,**  
 Ramsgate

## Folly of cutting back our verges

IT'S the middle of June, when wild flowers in grass verges are nearing their peak, and are an important source of pollen and nectar to bumble bees and other insects.

So, it is Sunday morning and Kent County Council are mowing the grass strip between a by road I live on and the A25. The flowers were just reaching perfection, the bumble bees collecting pollen, then in a few minutes they are all wiped out completely unnecessarily weeks too early.

Yet another nail in the coffin of our threatened wildlife..

**Jean Nobbs,**  
 Sundridge

## KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

**Kent on Sunday will:**

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.

- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

East

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

**We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.**  
 kent-life.co.uk kentnews.co.uk





**Chillenden  
Windmill**  
by **Oliver Mannion**

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**REVAMP:** Nissan Qashqai is redesigned inside and out for more premium ownership and a rather more entertaining driving experience



## Nissan dominance set to last with latest Qashqai

NISSAN is looking to raise its game with the new Qashqai crossover - blending the practicality and desirability of a sport utility vehicle with the footprint, running costs and accessibility of a hatchback - as it goes into its second decade and aims to continue dominating the sector.

The new crossover, which goes on sale next month, sees significant enhancements of its premium character with a contemporary new exterior design, higher levels of interior quality and improved driving performance.

It also drives forward Nissan's ongoing journey towards zero emissions and zero fatalities with new technologies available including ProPilot autonomous drive capability which controls the steering, acceleration and braking in a single lane on highways in both heavy traffic congestion or high-speed cruising.

The enhanced premium appeal is most obvious in the cabin, where an improved layout, higher-quality materials and advanced technology deliver an attractive and functional interior for all occupants, including seats trimmed in high-quality soft nappa leather, with luxurious 3D quilting on the centre panels.

Also new is a D-shaped multi-function steering wheel with premium satin-chrome inserts. It fea-



tures a new four-way controller for the combimeter display, for less 'eyes off the road' time.

To complement the interior upgrades, the exterior benefits from a fresh design including a completely revised front end with the latest 'V-motion' grille, revamped headlights, adaptive front lighting and more prominent 'boomerang'

front daytime running and rear lights.

On the safety front, intelligent emergency braking now recognises pedestrians as well as vehicles, and rear cross traffic alert, to mitigate the risk of low-speed impacts when reversing out of a parking space, is now available on Qashqai for the first time.



# Little Suzuki fired up to be giant-slayer

Suzuki faces stiff competition in its desire to drive the new Swift into the list of top 10 best-selling superminis. Simon Davis finds out if it's got what it takes...

**S**UZUKI hopes its third-generation Swift will be something of a giant-slayer.

With it, the Japanese company is looking to break into the top-10 portion of the B-segment market, and has the likes of the SEAT Ibiza, Skoda Fabia and Hyundai i20 firmly in its sights.

So Suzuki has gone to town on the new Swift – the 1.0-litre turbo petrol Boosterjet is available for the first time, standard equipment has been improved and the Swift has lost a considerable 120kg in bodyweight.

When revealed, many people thought the earlier models' character had been replaced by a rather sober-looking hatchback but, in the metal, it quickly grows on you and it's an attractive little car.

There won't be many complaints about space – particularly in the front. Headroom is plentiful, and while the Suzuki is a fairly compact little car, it doesn't feel cramped.

Under the bonnet, Suzuki offers the Swift with a choice of two different petrol engines.



The first is the 111PS 1.0-litre, three-cylinder Boosterjet turbo petrol unit and the test car had the 'mild hybrid' SVHS version.

It offers a slight boost in performance while combined economy improves from 61.4mpg

to 65.7mpg and CO2 emissions drop from 104g/km to 97g/km with SHVS compared to the regular engine.

A larger 90PS 1.2-litre, four-cylinder petrol engine is also available with the SHVS system for



101g/km CO2 and 62.8mpg combined.

While not a hugely powerful car, thanks to its small size and weighing from 890kg, on a winding road it feels like a go-kart. There is some body roll through

## Suzuki Swift

Price: **from £10,999**

Engine tested: **998cc, 111PS, three-cylinder Boosterjet turbo petrol with mild hybrid assist system**

Performance: **0-62mph: 10.6 seconds; top speed 121mph**

MPG: **urban 58.8; extra urban 70.6; combined 65.7 combined**

CO2 emissions: **97g/km**

Will it fit in the garage?: **L 3,840mm; W 1,735mm; H 1,495mm**

corners, and rough surfaces can make it bouncy but it's well mannered and stable at motorway speeds.

In town, its small proportions make navigating tight, busy streets much easier, as do its light controls.

Priced from £10,999 to £15,499, and with good equipment levels, the Swift is a lot of car for the money and is forecast to have decent resale values too.

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Motability

\*2017 C-HR Icon 5 door Coupe FWD 1.2 VVT-i Manual at £595 Advance Payment. Model shown is C-HR Dynamic 5 door Coupe FWD 1.2 VVT-i Manual at £1,795 Advance Payment, AYGO x-press 5 door 1.0 VVT-i x-shift at Nil Advance Payment, Auris Icon 5 door 1.6 D-4D Manual at £95 Advance Payment, Auris Touring Sports Icon 5 door 1.2 VVT-i Manual at £895 Advance Payment and Verso Icon 7-Seat 1.6 V-matic Manual at £295 Advance Payment. Subject to availability. Please note that a total of 60,000 miles over three years are allowed on the Motability Contract Hire Scheme. Offer valid between 1st April and 30th June 2017. Available as part of the Motability Contract Hire Scheme.

C-HR Dynamic 5 door Coupe FWD 1.2 VVT-i Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 38.1 (7.4), Extra Urban 55.4 (5.1), Combined 47.8 (5.9). CO2 Emissions 135g/km. AYGO x-press 5 door 1.0 VVT-i x-shift. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 56.5 (5.0), Extra Urban 78.5 (3.6), Combined 68.9 (4.1). CO2 Emissions 95g/km. Auris Icon 5 door 1.6 D-4D Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 55.4 (5.1), Extra Urban 74.3 (3.8), Combined 65.7 (3.8). CO2 Emissions 110g/km. Auris Touring Sports Icon 5 door 1.2 VVT-i Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 47.9 (5.9), Extra Urban 67.3 (4.2), Combined 58.9 (4.8). CO2 Emissions 112g/km. Verso Icon 7-Seat 1.6 V-matic Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 53.3 (5.3), Extra Urban 68.9 (4.1), Combined 62.8 (4.5). CO2 Emissions 119g/km. All mpg and CO2 figures quoted are sourced from official EU regulated laboratory test results. These are provided to allow comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect your actual driving experience.





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Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

### NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF A PREMISES LICENCE (LICENSING ACT 2003)

Karios Ltd of Marino's Fish Bar, 310A, Beaver Road, Ashford TN23 7SP has applied to Ashford Borough Council for the Grant of a Premises Licence under the Licensing Act 2003.

Licensing activities will be sale of alcohol (on and off sales) between 12:00hrs and 23:00hrs every day.

A register of licensing applications can be viewed at the Licensing Section, Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PL 01233 331111 by appointment.

Any person wishing to submit representations to this application must give notice in writing to the address shown above, giving in detail the grounds of objection by 12.07.2017.

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application and the maximum fine for which a person is liable on summary conviction for the offence is £5000.

**PLEASE MENTION THIS PAPER WHEN REPLYING TO THESE ADVERTISEMENTS**

ARCHANT



### M2 MOTORWAY - JUNCTIONS 4-6 (NEAR SITTINGBOURNE) TEMPORARY TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS

Notice is hereby given that Highways England Company Limited intends to make an Order on the M2 Motorway in the County of Kent and the Unitary Authority of Medway, under Section 14(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 because works are proposed to be executed on the road.

The effect of the Order would be to perform phased works as follows:-

- to authorise the overnight closure of:
  - both carriageways of the M2 between Junction 4 (A278) and Junction 6 (A251);
  - the road leading to the coast-bound carriageway of the M2 at Junction 4 (A278);
  - the road leading from the London-bound carriageway of the M2 at Junction 4 (A278);
  - the roads leading to and from both carriageways of the M2 at Farthing Corner Services;
  - the roads leading to and from both carriageways of the M2 at Junction 5 (A249);
  - the road leading from the coast-bound carriageway of the M2 at Junction 6 (A251); and
  - the road leading to the London-bound carriageway of the M2 at Junction 6 (A251);
- to impose a 24-hour 50 mph speed restriction on:
  - both carriageways of the M2 between Junction 4 (A278) eastern overbridge and Rawling Street underbridge; and
- to impose a 24-hour 40 mph speed restriction on:
  - both carriageways of the M2 between Yaugher Lane overbridge and the centre of Silver Street overbridge; and
  - all of the roads described in a) v) above;
- to authorise a 24-hour contraflow system diverting traffic on the London-bound carriageway to the coast-bound carriageway of the M2, between points 205 metres west of Bull Lane overbridge and 320 metres east of Vinsons Farm underbridge; and
- to permit hard-shoulder running adjacent to the length of carriageway described in d) above when the contraflow is in operation.

These measures would be in the interests of road safety while contractors undertake bridge works including bearing replacement, waterproofing, resurfacing and road marking and all associated works.

It is expected that the work would last for approximately 7 months starting on or after Monday 17th July 2017. The overnight closures would take place between 20:00 and 06:00 (maximum period).

The Order would come into force on 15 July 2017 and have a maximum duration of eighteen months.

Traffic affected by the closures would be diverted using the M20, A20, A229, A249, A251 and A252.

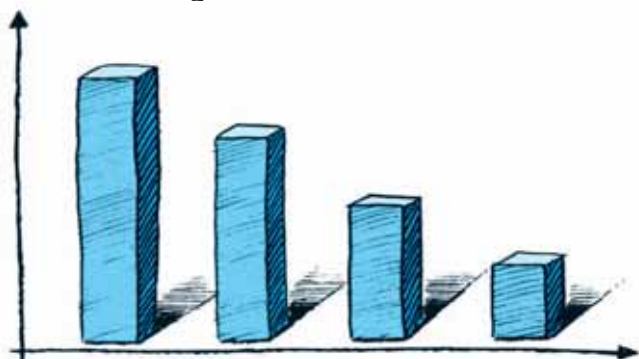
The temporary closures, speed limits, contraflow, hard shoulder running and diversion routes would be clearly indicated by traffic signs when they are in operation during the works period.

**P Ryder**, an Official of Highways England Co. Ltd. Ref: HE/SE/2017/M2/127

Highways England Company Limited, (Company No. 9346363). Registered Office: Bridge House, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 4LZ. A company registered in England and Wales.

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\*\*Source: The Wanted Ads STAGE 1. GfK NOP Base: all adults

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Spencer Private Hospitals are two hospitals situated in East Kent. The larger of the two hospitals is a 22 bed independent hospital situated at the QEOM Hospital in Margate, whilst the second hospital is a 4 bed independent hospital based at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Both hospitals have a reputation for providing excellent medical and surgical facilities supported by Specialist Consultants, Specialist Nurses and Physiotherapists. We have state of the art diagnostic equipment and exceptionally high standards of nursing care.

## The continuing growth of our business has resulted in vacancies for the following staff:

### Physiotherapist – Margate and Ashford

Full Time 37.5 hrs per week Salary - £27,000 - £29,000

Interview Date – TBC

#### Qualifications and Experience

- BSc or Equivalent in Physiotherapy
- Member of CSP
- Current HCPC Registration
- Relevant post graduate experience
- Proven clinical experience in the delivery of orthopaedic and MSK physiotherapy

### Staff Nurses X 3 – To cover our Ashford and potential growth to Canterbury

Full time Hours: 37.5 per week Salary: £23-25,000 per annum dependant on qualifications and experience

Interview - TBC

#### Qualifications and Experience

- Registered Nurse 1st level
- Evidence of continual professional development
- Experience in a surgical/medical environment with a knowledge and understanding of surgical/medical procedures
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills

### Theatre Practitioner - Margate

Full Time - 37.5 hours per week Salary - £21,000 – £25,000 per annum (dependant on experience) Interview – TBC

#### Qualifications and Experience

- Registered Nurse or Operating Department Practitioner
- NMC/HPC Registered
- Maths and English (GCSE or equivalent) Grade C or above.
- Ability to assess, plan and evaluate patient care
- Knowledge or research and evidence based practice
- Teaching and assessing/mentorship
- Catalyst for change

### Anaesthetic Practitioner - Margate

Full Time - 37.5 hours per week - £21k – 25k per annum

Interview date - TBC

#### Qualifications and Experience

- Operating Department Practitioner
- HPC Registered
- Knowledge of research and evidence-based practice
- Teaching and assessing/mentorship, or willing to undertake
- Anaesthetics
- Knowledge of CQC
- HLS Teaching (Anaes)

### Staff Nurse Out Patients – Margate

Part Time 30 hrs per week Salary - £26,121.29 (pro rata)

Interview Date – TBC

#### Qualifications and Experience

- Registered Nurse 1st level
- Experience within the outpatients department and in a surgical/medical environment with a knowledge and understanding of surgical/medical procedures
- Demonstrates patient focus
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Commitment to professional development

### Health Care Assistant – Level 3

Part time – 30 hours per week Salary - £16,600 (pro rata)

Closing Date – 19 June 2017 Interview Date – 22 or 27 June 2017

#### Qualifications and Experience

- Evidence of Health Care experience
- GCSE English or equivalent
- Experience in the provision of patient care
- Excellent communication skills
- Ability to work flexibly, including evenings and weekends

### Staff Nurse (Ward Margate)

Part Time 30 hrs per week Salary - £13.75 per hour

Closing Date – 20th June 2017

Interview Date – 27th June and 4th July 2017

#### Qualifications and Experience

- Registered Nurse 1st level
- Evidence of continual professional development
- Experience in a surgical/medical environment with a knowledge and understanding of surgical/medical procedures
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to work independently and as part of a multi-disciplinary team
- Committed to providing a quality clinical service

### Housekeeper - Margate

Part Time – 30 hours per week Salary £7.54 per hour

Closing Date – 19 June 2017 Interview Date – 27th and 29th June 2017

#### Qualifications and Experience

- Previous housekeeping experience
- Previous experience in a customer facing role
- Mathematics and English (GCSE or Equivalent) Grade C or above
- Able to work independently and as part of a team
- Ability to recognise and report situations affecting patient care
- Flexible approach
- Supportive to patients and colleagues.

## Previous applicants need not apply for any role

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# Gemili and Green named in squad

## Duo head to the European Athletics Team Championships

### Athletics

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

KENT athletes Adam Gemili and Jack Green have been named in Great Britain's squad for the European Athletics Team Championships in Lille next week.

In a largely developmental team, Dartford's Gemili and Green, from Maidstone, will provide crucial experience, with just seven weeks to go until the World Championships in London.

At last summer's Olympic Games in Brazil, sprinter Gemili was named captain and agonisingly missed out on a medal in the 200m race by three-thousandths of a second and is looking to make up for lost time after missing the 2015 World Championships in Beijing through injury.

Green, meanwhile, crashed out in the semi-finals of the men's 400m hurdles, just as he did in London four years before.

British Athletics performance director, Neil Black said: "Many of these athletes should be in the mix for Tokyo 2020 and beyond in 2024, so it will be interesting to see where they stand against some of Europe's top names."

"With the British Team Trials and qualification for the World Championships taking place the following weekend in Birmingham, it has allowed us the somewhat unique opportunity to choose a largely developmental team."

"Obviously we still want to see a great British team performance in France, but we also need to give our most experienced athletes the best



**LEADER:** Kent's Adam Gemili will be one of the more experienced athletes in Lille

possible build-up going into a home World Championships – so everyone on the WCPP was given the option to compete in Lille or concentrate on trials.

"I'm glad so many of those we expect to be selected in the field events for London have made themselves available for this event – we will be

looking for them to pick up a large number of points for the team."

"Jumpers and throwers especially have limited opportunities to compete at elite level, so to have two top class competitions, first in France then back home in Birmingham, over two weekends in a row will be good for them."

## Shah makes immediate impact for county

### Cricket

KENT head coach Matt Walker has hailed Yasir Shah's immediate impact as he made his county championship debut last weekend and helped the county maintain their impressive unbeaten start to the campaign.

The Pakistan bowler arrived in the county earlier this month to much excitement, as the world's top-ranked Test spinner, with Kent looking to add overseas firepower to their attack.

Shah also boasts the record of being the second fastest bowler of all-time to take 100 wickets in Test cricket, achieving the feat in just 17 matches and was top of the ICC Test bowler rankings last summer.



**STAR:** Yasir Shah

However, in last week's county championship clash with Durham, he was required to show his

capabilities with the bat, as an unbroken last-wicket stand between Shah and Mitch Claydon saw out the final 46 balls of the match to secure a thrilling draw at Canterbury.

Shah batted for 81 minutes while last man Claydon – a former Durham player – combined to deny Paul Collingwood's side their first win and clinch a battling draw, ahead of a trip to Worcestershire on Monday.

Walker said this week: "We were naturally nervous because the odds were against us."

"Yasir Shah played beautifully for us and manufactured things nicely to try and get as much as the strike as he could and Mitch Claydon did his bit too."

"It's five extra points and who knows how much they'll be worth to us come the end of the season?"

## Sport Shorts

» Email the sports desk  
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

## Gravesend-born rugby star gets England start

KENT-BORN back Piers Francis was due to make his full England debut this weekend in Argentina.

The former Old Gravesendians mini and youth player made his first England appearance last week as a replacement against the same opponents, making a defining contribution to the game with two try assists.

Francis was then expected to make his first start in the number 12 shirt for his country, having made a name for himself with Auckland Blues in recent months.

A fly-half or centre who grew up in Gravesend and used to play for Maidstone, Francis headed to New Zealand eight years ago and was part of the Auckland Academy before moving on to play in the National Provincial Championship and then Super Rugby.

He has played in all four rounds of this year's Super Rugby competition, and recently completed a move to Premiership side Northampton Saints ahead of next season.



**CALL:** Piers Francis



**BOSS:** Gills head coach Ady Pennock

## Former QPR forward Parker in Gills switch

GILLINGHAM have made their fourth signing of the summer with the permanent addition of forward Josh Parker on a two-year deal.

The 27-year-old, who came through the youth ranks at QPR, had loan spells at AFC Wimbledon, Northampton and Wycombe before joining Oldham in 2011.

He later joined Gillingham in the January transfer window earlier this

year on a contract until the end of the 2016/17 season.

Boss Ady Pennock was impressed with Parker during his period at the Gills and offered him a new two-year deal, which the player was happy to accept.

He joins Gabriel Zakuani, Alex Lacey and Luke O'Neill who have also arrived at Priestfield earlier this summer.

## Stadium plans 'a selling point'

BROMLEY winger Adam Mekki admits the club's stadium development plans were "a massive selling point" when he decided to join the National League side last week.

The 25-year-old signed from Tranmere Rovers earlier this month having come through the youth ranks at Reading and Aldershot Town before also enjoying spells with Barnet and Dover Athletic.

Several teams were in the hunt for his signature, but Mekki told the

club's website discussions with boss Neil Smith about the 3G pitch currently being installed at Hayes Lane, as well as plans to construct a new South Stand, were enough to convince him.

He said: "I spoke to a few clubs but I felt this was the right one for me."

"I spoke to the gaffer and it was a massive selling point, it told me the club was going in the right direction – it's on its way up and I'm glad to be a part of it."



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